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The Editors
PIPELINE POLITICS

Steven Spielberg, suburban animist

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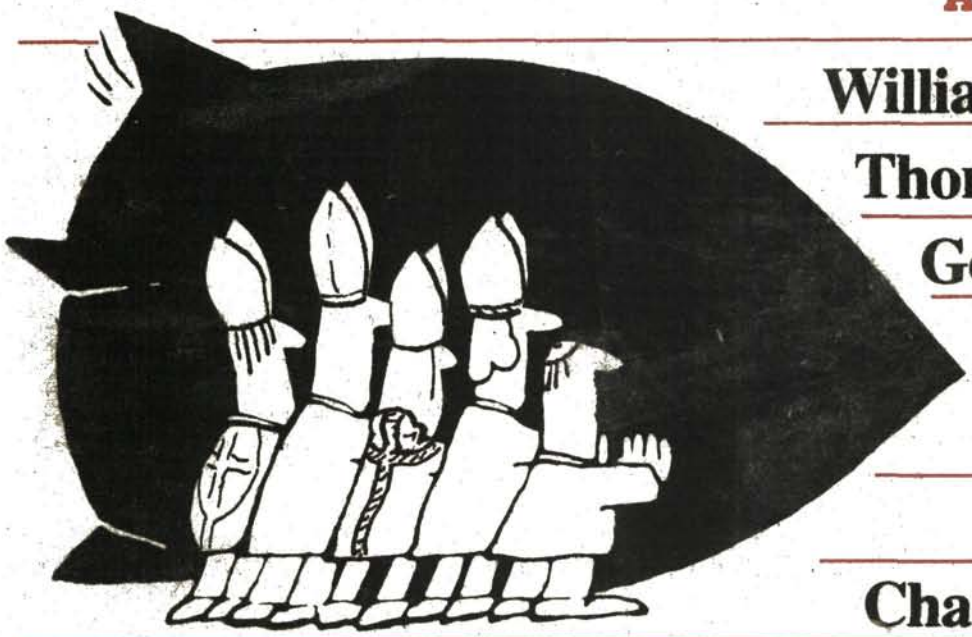

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Gordon C. Zahn
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THE BISHOPS & THE BOMB: NINE RESPONSES TO THE PASTORAL ON PEACE & WAR

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Correspondence

Garland for Garvey

Rochester, N.Y.

To the Editors: About a year and a half ago, browsing in the library, I came across John Garvey's column comparing Secular Humanism and the Moral Majority and was so impressed that I immediately subscribed to *Commonweal* in order to keep in touch with what else Mr. Garvey would have to say. There are by now many more reasons why I'm glad to have your magazine come regularly in the mail, but the wisdom of Mr. Garvey's latest column on "Loving God for Nothing" [June 4] confirms my sense that here is a thinker especially worth reading. I want to thank *Commonweal* for making his always valuable and sometimes even painfully penetrating comments regularly available.

PEGGY ROSENTHAL

Greeley's novels

Spokane, Wash.

To the Editors: It seems to be very trendy among Catholic commentators to look down one's nose and be either condescending or nasty about Andrew Greeley's novels. Frank McConnell [June 4] fits right in. Many reviewers in secular periodicals think otherwise. Are the secular reviewers so perverse, so stupid, so unsophisticated that they cannot recognize literary trash when they read it? Are reviewers in Catholic periodicals — including Frank McConnell — so discriminating, so intelligent, so much more highly qualified to evaluate Greeley's novels, that they are to be trusted in favor of their secular counterparts? Are the reviewers in secular periodicals little more than dunces pandering to popular tastes?

I think not. Granted Greeley's novels will never rank with Tolstoy, or even Flannery O'Connor. But he is able to write good stories that say something truthful to ordinary people about the human nature of the church. He tells stories about the ways in which the Divine Mystery is experienced by ordinary Catholics outside of churchy situations, in the world most of us inhabit every day. He is able to say that there is hope, and that God enables ordinary people to act with courage, faith and love, even in the midst of human sinfulness.

In a nation where Catholics — and especially priests, bishops, etc. — are frequently perceived by others in ways that do little justice either to reality or to Catholic ideals, this is no small thing.

One crusty old agnostic friend of mine put it succinctly after reading *Thy Brother's Wife*: "Maybe you Catholics aren't so out of touch with what matters to the rest of the world as I thought."

MITCH FINLEY
Parish Services Office

The author replies:

I fear there is little I can say in reply, except to apologize to Mr. Finley for arousing his rancor, and observing that he is perfectly entitled to *like* Andrew Greeley's novels, if he wants to. I myself have an irrational fondness for Velveeta Cheese and for Disco music, and I would resent anyone trying to dissuade me from those addictions. It is just that Greeley's novels really are, you know, bad. The "many reviewers" from the secular press who like Greeley's work, whom Finley invokes, do not actually exist. The books are *silly*—even if they do soften the soul of the occasional "crusty old agnostic"—and have, as far as I can see, less to do with the "Divine Mystery" than the latest well-written detective thriller. But that may be only the opinion of a middle-aged, less than crusty agnostic. Let a thousand flowers bloom, as one of the seriously religious writers of this century has said.

FRANK McCONNELL

Salvadoran terror

Dundas, Ontario

To the Editors: The recent editorial on the Salvadoran elections [June 4, "Salvadoran Ballots — and Bullets"] was disappointing for its naivété. The author obviously has little or no conception of the importance of identity cards in Latin American countries. For El Salvador one need only point to published photographs of security checks and to the frequent references in accounts of arrests by security forces where persons were apprehended while they were lacking such documentation.

The author also fails to recognize that the number of disenfranchised refugees almost equals the number of votes cast; that the number of documented murders in the three years prior to the elections equals a quarter to a third of the number of votes; and that a large portion of the population living in the quarter to a third of the country under FDR/FMLN control did indeed vote with their feet. Testimony to the Canadian Parliamentary Sub-Committee on Latin America and the Caribbean indicates that the voter turnout was about 50 percent of those eligible. The report of the sub-committee calls attention to the very real atmosphere of terror as a factor influencing the vote.

DANIEL J. GEAGAN

Just the facts

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: Your editorial of May 21 disparagingly suggests that People For The American Way was "fighting fire with fire" in our recent print ad campaign. We are not fighting fire with "fire"; we are fighting it with the facts. People For's aim is to remind the public of America's constitutional tradition of religious diversity and political pluralism and to expose excesses and attacks that threaten that tradition.

(Continued on page 446)

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DARK AT THE END OF THE PIPELINE

BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES and its European allies, said French Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson, a "progressive divorce" is developing. He was referring, of course to the tensions that have arisen over the U.S. ban on supplies for the 3700-mile Soviet-Western Europe gas pipeline. "We no longer speak the same language," he said. "There is a remarkable incomprehension, and that is grave. The United States seems totally indifferent to our problems. It is the major ally and the world's biggest country and we don't even talk anymore."

Shortly after Mr. Cheysson's statement, the French government officially announced that it was instructing French companies to fulfill their contracts to produce American-licensed components for the pipeline despite a ban by President Reagan. Immediately afterward, Chancellor Helmut Schmidt of West Germany said: "The pipeline will be built, and the British, the French, the Germans, and other Europeans will stick to the agreements which their firms have been making with the Soviets." Mr. Schmidt's comment was followed by an announcement from Italy that it would honor all signed agreements to supply equipment for the natural gas pipeline, despite the Reagan ban. All of this only made worse what may have been the cruelest blow of all, the statement by longtime Reagan ally Margaret Thatcher to the House of Commons that it is wrong for "one very powerful nation" to try to prevent the fulfillment of "existing contracts" in the pipeline dispute.

It is not surprising that our European allies are upset. They had—or thought they had—reached an understanding with President Reagan at the Versailles summit just a few weeks ago. Mr. Reagan's decision to tighten the ban on the sale of American or American-licensed equipment for the pipeline runs directly counter to that agreement, which involved a vague consensus to limit future credits to the Soviet bloc, in return, the Europeans thought, for an easing of the American position on the pipeline. This was the compromise hammered out by then-Secretary of State Alexander Haig, but our allies soon found that this agreement and Mr. Haig himself were early casualties of the Reagan return to the fevered climate in Washington.

With remarkable unanimity, the Atlantic allies are unpersuaded by American arguments against the pipeline, and the U.S. must take this unanimity into account. The pipeline deal will diversify their sources of energy supply, the Europeans argue, not making them unduly dependent on the USSR but releasing them from overdependence on uncertain Middle Eastern oil. Even more fundamentally, our European allies believe a certain amount of two-way trade with the Eastern bloc will help ease tensions and reduce the danger that cold war will become hot. And our European partners make two other points. The weak spot in the Soviet economy, they say, is food; if the U.S. wants to punish the Soviet Union for Poland, why not cut off U.S. grain shipments? Why penalize Europe and not U.S. farmers? Even more emphatically, they fear the whole Reagan approach. They suspect that the Reagan adminis-

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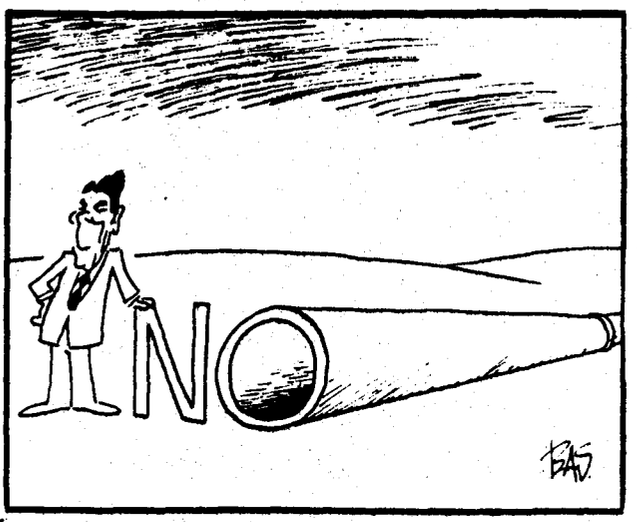

tration would like to wage total economic war on the USSR in an effort to bring the Communist system down, and they think there was a suggestion of this in Mr. Reagan's London speech. They are simply not persuaded that such a course is anything but a dangerous and ill-conceived idea which could well lead to international catastrophe. They certainly do not want such a course to be followed without ample consultation among the allies, and this condition they feel has not been given even lip-service.

So there the matter stands at this momemt. Mr. Reagan is clearly trying to go far beyond the normal limits of an embargo, endeavoring to nullify sales that were perfectly legal when they were made. And to make matters worse from a European and Canadian point of view, he is trying to enforce American decrees on foreign companies through their American owners or through their licenses for American technology—in short, to make such companies compliant instruments of U.S. foreign policy inside their host country. How can our allies be expected to tolerate such a procedure?

In sum, what the Reagan administration has managed to do is to create what may be the most serious crisis inside the Atlantic alliance since its creation—and this after already alienating most of our Latin American allies by our policies in that area. All it needs to do now is drive China back into the Soviet Union's arms and it will have come full circle to what it may really want—back to a Fortress America, armed to the teeth and alone in the world.

DISAPPEARING PRIESTS

It is underlining the obvious, but let us do it anyway. The new official Catholic Directory, published by P.J. Kenedy & Sons of New York, is out, and the figures make plain the fact that the shortage of priests in the United States will in the not so distant future reach the crisis stage. By the end of this century—only eighteen years away—there will be fifty percent fewer active priests than there are today.

The seminaries reflect the problem. In 1966 there were 48,000 seminarians. Six years later that figure had declined to just short of 23,000. Today there are 11,500—down 800 from a year ago. Chicago, the largest archdiocese in the country, is more or less typical. This year it will ordain only seven priests, far fewer than the number who will die or retire. The diocese of Brooklyn, with thirteen men retiring, will ordain only three.

Going by past indications, about half of those ordained this year may be expected to resign from the priesthood by the year 2000. The chief reason, as indicated in research by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago: rejection of the policy of celibacy. According to the Kenedy directory, there are now 58,085 religious and diocesan priests in the United States. The prediction by the NORC is that there will be fewer than 25,000 by the end of the century.

All of this is happening at a time when the Catholic population is increasing. Last year there were 51,207,579 Catholics in the U.S., up 57,737 from the year before. Infant baptisms were up 38,954 to 982,586 and there were 92,861 adult conversions. The meaning of these figures, obviously: a greater need for priests, not lesser.

Church leaders customarily refer to the declining number of priests as a crisis caused by a shortage in the number of vocations. But this way of describing the problem, of course, ignores any question of permitting married priests and of reconsidering the question of women priests. It simply presumes that the only ones who can be called to the priesthood are male and celibate. How many churches will have to be without priests, we wonder, and how many Catholics without the Eucharist before the leadership in the church is willing to re-examine this assumption?

MORE ON PAW

At the beginning of the summer, this journal criticized a series of newspaper ads run by People for the American Way. That organization's Executive Director quickly wrote to say that the PAW ads are only deploying "facts"; his letter is printed in this issue. We don't think the matter is that simple.

First, even on the most elementary level, PAW's "facts" are deceptive. One ad, for example, quotes the Rev. Charles Stanley as saying, "We do not want a democracy in this land because if we have a democracy a majority rules." Professor Jeffrey K. Hadden, author of *Prime Time Preachers*, kindly brought to our attention the source of this quotation. In a sermon (preached four years ago), Rev. Stanley contrasted a *republic* ("rule by law . . . the Constitution . . . a Bill of Rights") with a *monarchy* ("rule by one"), an *oligarchy* ("rule by a few"), and a *democracy* ("rule by a majority"). It was in this context—the familiar one of warning against the limits of majority rule—that the preacher said, "In our country we have a republic. We do not want an oligarchy. Nor do we want a democracy in this land because if we have a democracy a majority rules . . . and a majority oftentimes becomes mob rule."

Political philosophers might not be satisfied with the Reverend Stanley's distinction between republic and democracy; nor are we satisfied with many of the other things he said in the same sermon. But the context clearly shows that his intent was

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quite different, and far less ominous, than the impression given by People for the American Way's truncated version. Evidently there are facts and there are facts.

Are all the other quotations provided in the ads or in Mr. Podesta's letter similarly denatured? We doubt it. The leaders of the new religious right are capable of saying some pretty fantastic and frightening things. But that only leads us to our second objection—the central one of our original editorial—that the PAW ads played up a number of outrageous statements and acts to discredit a large, undefined group of "moral majoritarians" who had no responsibility for such matters. Now Mr. Podesta names several people who, he says, claim to work together and head a movement—and therefore should be held accountable for one another's statements. We are not sure exactly why Jerry Falwell should be held accountable for Phyllis Schlafly's every statement, or vice versa; but if that's what PAW means, it should simply say so explicitly in its ads. The fact is that the shadowy "they" featured in the ads could include anyone opposed to the Equal Rights Amendment ("If you're a woman, they want to keep you 'in your place.'") or to abortion ("They want to involve the government in your decision to have children. Or not to."). Is every constitutional scholar who is cool toward the E.R.A. (and there are some quite respectable ones) to be lumped with Phyllis Schlafly? Is this what PAW means by promoting diversity and pluralism?

The fact is that PAW confuses defense of pluralism and of the Constitution with its own liberal leanings. The Religious Roundtable, for example, thinks that Social Security should be abolished in favor of a private pension system. That strikes us as a highly unsound (and also quixotic) political position. But, *pace* PAW, Social Security is *not* a constitutional right. Likewise, issues like what textbooks should be adopted by public schools, or what books belong in school libraries, or what degree of state intervention in family life is legitimate to protect children, are not all cut-and-dried. Many conservative positions on these issues deserve to be debated on their merits, not summarily branded as assaults on constitutional freedoms.

One final objection to the PAW campaign is its weakness for the slippery half-truths and stock slogans of moral relativism and unthinking individualism. "The American Way," declare the ads, "is the freedom to hold your own opinions and practice your beliefs. Not somebody else's." Well, not quite—as believing racists, wife-beaters, sweat-shop owners should (we hope) know. The PAW ads slur the difference between "belief" and "practice," not acknowledging society's right to set certain standards of behavior. Thus they can loosely talk of "forcing" and "imposing" beliefs on everyone, and appear to reinforce the liberal tendency to see any religiously inspired civic position as an imposition of "particular religious beliefs." Furthermore, when PAW promotional material counters the New Right claim to represent the one true Christian or American position with a pledge "to affirm the right of every American to hold *any* opinion," it unfortunately contributes to another widespread confusion. The New Right seems to slide from the proposition that its adversaries' positions are wrong to the proposition that its adversaries' positions should be suppressed. PAW seems to slide from the proposition that Americans have a right to hold any opinion to the proposition that no one can claim some opinions much worthier of being held than others.

These are complicated matters, and it is easy to imagine that, distressed by the demagoguery of the New Religious Right, citizens might feel justified in shrugging off these distinctions. Are we asking PAW to abide by unrealistic standards of thoughtfulness in this age of media overload and "negative campaigning"? We think not. The talent that Norman Lear can command should be able to live up to what he originally announced as the goal of the organization: "appealing to the best instincts in our people—not to their fears and anxieties." Appealing to fears and anxieties, however, is precisely what the recent newspaper campaign was calculated to do. We repeat our belief that PAW's distinguished Board of Advisors ought to set the group back on the right track.

In keeping with *Commonweal*'s usual summer schedule, only one issue is published during the month of August. The next issue will be dated Sept. 10, after which regular biweekly publication will be resumed.

Of several minds: *Abigail McCarthy*

THE LONE COWBOY

GALLUP-ING TO A DIFFERENT DRUMMER

IN MAY OF THIS YEAR the Gallup organization, in cooperation with CARA, a Washington-based Catholic research organization, held a press conference to report on the findings of the American phase of its multi-nation values study. The findings caused something of a stir.

AMERICANS WILLING TO FIGHT, PROUD OF U.S. trumpeted a headline in the *Washington Post*; SURVEY FINDS WORK RATED HIGH IN U.S.—"Suggests Americans Are Most Willing to Fight for Country," announced the *New York Times*. Gordon Heald, Gallup's London director, clearly thought the American results somewhat surprising and certainly significant. The people involved in the values study consider it an important and unprecedented investigation of the fundamental attitudes that determine human behavior. The Reverend Cassian Yuhaus, president of CARA, called the project "the most exciting study that's been done in modern times."

There is one at every press conference, of course, and there was a reporter at this one who was moved to ask "Who

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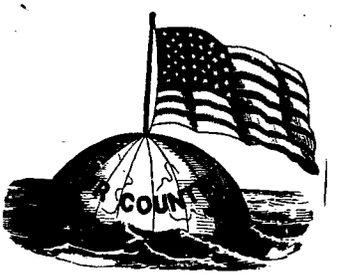
cares?" This is a better question than it seems at first glance. Scholars whose field is the study of human behavior undoubtedly are interested in the results for their own sake. Dr. Florence Rosenberg, psychologist on the CARA staff, says, "I would hope that people would see the study as a contribution to our general knowledge." Father Yuhaus, as might be expected of a man directing *applied* research (CARA, the acronym, stands for Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate), hopes that the study will help social thinkers to bridge the gap between those caught in poverty and "those who grow richer every year."

The study, however, is expensive. It cost $500,000 in the United States alone. It has been funded in Belgium, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Holland, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Spain, Italy, West Germany, Sweden, Finland, South Africa, and Japan. The researchers plan to go into Canada, Hungary, Argentina, Puerto Rico, Australia, New Zealand, Switzerland, Norway, Austria, Brazil, Singapore, Trinidad—perhaps the Soviet Union. Funding is being sought for Mexico. Obviously people who do care are financing it.

Why do they care? They are not only from academic, church, and charitable institutions by any means. They range, according to Heald, from a Swedish insurance company to the Japanese Leisure Development Center, a government-related organization. CARA, whose research is at the service of the church, is not necessarily church-funded. Its various projects are done by contract or funded by grants from foundations and individuals.

Businessmen, especially those who trade or sell in many countries as most businesses do today, can look at such a comprehensive study as a rather grand form of market research. Multinational manufacturers and developers can find in it clues and information about labor supply. Purveyors of mass entertainment can find out what the people want and what the traffic will bear. Governments—and this could be disturbing—can study the survey to determine what support there is for present or future policy.

At first blush the study is encouraging to American business and the current administration. Consider the first paragraphs of the CARA press release: "If they had the choice between freedom of the individual and equality (nobody underprivileged and no strong class differences),[Americans] more than anyone else in a new sixteen-country study . . . would choose freedom. Americans take more pride in their national identity than people of any other country, and are more willing to fight for their country than anyone else. Compared to Europe and Japan, Americans as a society are more religious, with American blacks more than all the others saying God is extremely important in their lives. Americans are among the highest . . . in satisfaction with life . . . and among those



most ready to claim that they are very happy. . . . Americans also claim more pride in their work than any other nationality . . . more than the Japanese and West Germans. Confidence in institutions is higher than in Europe. . . ."

In other words the traditional values hold—and to an extent the researchers found surprising. And it is surprising. In a post-Vietnam world, in a world of nuclear proliferation, in a world in which even many bishops have jettisoned the concept of a just war and say that no form of war is acceptable—in that world are Americans really so willing to fight for their country? Perhaps. The values study shows us to be most like the British in general attitude and we have lately seen the British stoutly supporting the war in the Falklands. But reflection on the study raises questions.

The crucial question is how, and to what extent, values influence behavior. How much are the values claimed simply part of the respondent's mental image of himself, herself, and the country? An American's work, for example, is a matter of self-definition. It is often what an American *is* in his own and other people's minds—a farmer, a mechanic, a writer, a businessman. If he did not take pride in it, he would be lessening his picture of himself. A Japanese, on the other hand, as a specialist in Oriental Studies noted in discussing this result with the research team, does not think of his work as *his*. He is always part of a group, of a corporate structure. It would seem to him boastful and immodest to claim a personal pride in his work. And what of the West Germans? Only *fifteen percent* of them assert that they take pride in work as compared with *eighty-four percent* of Americans. The results in Japan and Germany on this one item are the most surprising in the light of the high level of productivity in those countries. Can one say, then, that putting value on work, as Americans apparently do, makes for better workers?

Ninety-five percent of Americans say they believe in God (compare with sixty-two percent in France). Eighty-one percent consider themselves religious. In this connection it is to be remembered that religion is, and has been, for Americans a means of identification and an organizing factor. They also believe in the personal application of the Ten Commandments to themselves. But these same Americans are less likely than others to think children need a two-parent family. They have a higher tolerance than *any* other nation for killing in self-defense, divorce, euthanasia, and abortion. They are least likely to justify car-stealing (cars can presumably be equated with property in general). It makes one wonder what the freedom is that Americans seem to prize so highly.

Can it be that this happy, patriotic, religious American is—in the words of Professor Kenneth Keniston commenting on two other studies—still "the lone cowboy seeking personal fulfillment in an empty desert"? ("Never mind that we know there are 220 million Americans crowded into our desert and four billion more human beings around the edge," he adds.)

This study tells us what we think of ourselves. That is a beginning. But does it tell what we will do?

ABIGAIL McCARTHY

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Church/world watch

The lessons of Lebanon

J. Bryan Hehir

THE TRAGEDY of Lebanon is so vividly before us in 1982 that we can too easily forget the achievements of Lebanon. Too often the conflict in Lebanon over the past seven years has been defined in the West as a religious war of Christians and Moslems. The definition was always analytically defective since religious division by itself has never been adequate to describe the roots of the war in Lebanon. But more importantly, the description of religious war has become historically shortsighted. Lebanon's history has been predominantly a successful pursuit of religious pluralism in a context where pluralism is not easily or often maintained.

But it was not only Christian and Moslem faiths which coexisted in Lebanon, it was also a striking mixture of Eastern and Western cultures which sustained the political and economic success of Lebanon. Lebanon is an Arab country but its relationship to the West is evident throughout the culture. Geographically and culturally Lebanon has been a bridge between East and West. It has drawn from the culture of East and West and it has contributed to both.

Politically, Lebanon has been a functioning democracy, characterized by freedom and respect for civil liberty. Like every democracy Lebanon had its problems; its ideals and ideas were always grander than its daily experience. But there was no doubt about the objectives which shaped the political destiny of the nation.

The point here is not to indulge in retrospective idealism in order to avoid the trauma of the present moment. But we need to remember what Lebanon has been in order to achieve perspective on what Lebanon can be. Lebanon's complexity of Christian and Moslem, East and West, freedom and order has been tested on several fronts in recent years: demographic change, social and economic modernization with its resulting patterns of inequality; political pressure on the fragile structure of the national compact.

Some of what has occurred in Lebanon in the last seven years can be attributed to these internal factors and failure to adjust and adapt them to the new needs of the society. But an even more significant factor has been the pressure of external forces on the Lebanese political system.

The first of these forces was the transformation of the Palestinian question in Lebanon from a refugee presence — which has been part of Lebanon since 1949—to the political and military presence of the PLO during the 1970s. This constituted a dual problem for the Lebanese: any PLO activity against Israel drew Israeli fire on Lebanon; within Lebanon the Palestinians came to be a state within the state of Lebanon, effectively denying the Lebanese authorities the capability of governing. One can acknowledge all of this and still recognize that the Lebanese have continually supported the rights of the Palestinians in the Middle East.

The second foreign force has been the Syrian presence in Lebanon since 1976. The Syrians came, under a negotiated agreement, as a peacekeeping force. Gradually they took on the character of an occupying army. The third force, attracted to Lebanon by the PLO and Syrian presence, has been Israeli; while Israeli military and political policies have been part of the Lebanese dilemma for several years, the 1982 invasion had a qualitatively different character from any previous action.

How should the invasion be assessed? From the perspective of Israel, all actions undertaken in Lebanon have been of a defensive nature and were necessitated by PLO attacks on Israel. Israel does face objective threats to its security, and U.S. efforts to guarantee Israel's existence and security within the territorial boundaries acknowledged by UN Resolution 242 deserve support.

Concern for Israel's security, however, does not justify the present invasion. The invasion fails the test of justification on three grounds.

First, the killing of civilians; this is a fundamental rule for assessing the political and moral justification of any military action. It is the dike separating limited from unlimited warfare. It is often transgressed, as it was by the United States and by other nations in World War II and Vietnam, and as it has been by Palestinian attacks on Israeli civilians and by several parties within Lebanon in the last seven years. But transgression of the rule only makes its reassertion more necessary. Indeed Israel's rationale for the invasion is predicated on defending its civilian population. The same principle should be used to assess its action. Estimates of civilian casualties vary, depending on the source. It is not my purpose to adjudicate the statistical debate, but the plain fact of the matter is that the invasion has resulted in a very substantial loss of civilian lives. This has been due to the nature of the attack, the weapons used and civilian centers targeted during the invasion. Claims of self-defense and security needs made by any nation are not self-justifying; they must be pursued with restraint and within defined limits. The Israeli invasion manifested little restraint and clearly trangressed the essential limit of civilian immunity from direct attack.

Second, the failure to observe restraint resulted in an enormous amount of physical and social damage. The expanding objective of the invasion, progressively announced as it was executed, has laid waste the coastal cities

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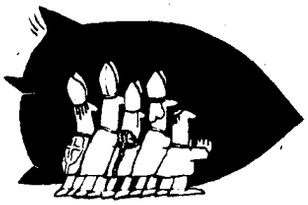
The bishops & the bomb—nine responses



AFTER ONE YEAR of extensive consultations and discussion, the Committee on War and Peace established by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops has completed the first draft of a pastoral letter on moral problems posed by nuclear arms and on the church's peacemaking role in a nuclear age. The draft has been circulated to the bishops and fully reported in the Catholic press. The committee is currently revising it in light of comments received from all quarters, and the revised version will be discussed and voted upon at the general meeting of U.S. bishops in November.

After an analysis of the scriptural basis for a Christian commitment to peace and of the development of just-war theory, as well as of Christian pacifism, the bishops' draft addresses the problem of nuclear weapons and deterrence. It rejects all first use of nuclear weapons and all use of them whatsoever against civilian populations or against military targets so close to concentrations of civilians that the latter populations would be devastated. According to the draft, a narrow justification might be found by Christians for the retaliatory use of nuclear weapons against military targets where discrimination of civilian populations was possible. The bishops found no justification for deterrence based on threats against cities and civilian populations; at most, such deterrence—a "moral evil"—can be tolerated in order to prevent greater instability and possible catastrophe while efforts for genuine disarmament are underway. The bishops reject immediate, unilateral nuclear disarmament, but insist that "a temporary toleration of some aspects of nuclear deterrence must not be confused with approval of such deterrence" or with complacence about the status quo. The letter contains a variety of pastoral recommendations for the American church and groups within it, including young people, educators, those serving in the military, government, and defense industries, and Catholic peace activists. "We honestly believe our conclusions flow from our moral and spiritual tradition," write the bishops, "yet recognizing the complexity of the issues, we offer them as an invitation to moral direction, dialogue, and growth."

To contribute to that dialogue, Commonweal *has solicited responses to the draft from nine Catholics representing a range of viewpoints and experience in confronting questions of peace and war. Numerous other aspects of the bishops' draft are described in the course of the responses that follow.*

THE EDITORS

JOHN LANGAN

A useful benchmark of Catholic thinking

"GOD'S HOPE IN A TIME OF FEAR," the draft version of the pastoral letter on peace and war which is scheduled for debate and possible approval at the November meeting of the U.S. Catholic bishops, is an incomplete, inconsistent, and therefore very useful document. It shows respect for heroic Christian pacifists and for valiant American warriors. It hovers between nuclear pacifism and a restatement of just-war theory for a nuclear age. It does not demand unilateral nuclear disarmament by the United States but recommends unilateral initiatives. It denounces the spending of money on arms and recognizes that conventional arms may have to be increased if its views opposing the first use of nuclear weapons are adopted. It offers both realistic reflections and utopian yearnings.

The tensions and inconsistencies within this document are an appropriate and honorable outcome for a committee struggling with a profound and complex problem in which such fundamental values as the sanctity of human life and the preservation of a free society are perceived to make incompatible demands. The unresolved character of this phase of the debate, in which the bishops propose a temporary toleration of a "marginally justifiable deterrent policy" is also, I would argue, an appropriate expression of the inconclusiveness of theological research and reflection on the issues and of the conflicting impulses of fear and generosity, of mistrust and yearning which sweep through popular discussion and through

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the American electorate. Given the relatively high level of public attention the bishops have received, many readers may regard the statement as indecisive and disappointing. But the seriousness with which the statement has been prepared and the expressions of concern for the future in which it abounds should be seen as evidence that the church will make a continuing investment of its time and energy, its theological and educational resources, into the task of becoming, in Bishop Mahony's phrase, "a church of peace advocacy."

At present, it is safe to say that moral theologians have not given to these issues a fraction of the care they have expended on contraception, and that church organizations have not shown the same concerted commitment to opposing nuclear weapons that they have shown against abortion. The document itself suggests various areas for further reflection and action and provides a model of how Catholics can make some headway on the issues without achieving complete theoretical agreement and without submerging differences of political judgment. The statement provides a good example of the church's effort to make up its mind on a question for which there is no straightforward traditional answer but to which many elements of our theological tradition are relevant. The question also requires docility before the facts and methods of various academic disciplines and an attentive readiness to read "the signs of the times" and to hear the Word of the Lord. So the statement exemplifies a valuable form of ecclesial learning as well as of teaching.

The statement also provides a useful benchmark of how far the Catholic discussion of the issues has moved over the last few years. One of the fundamental sources of difficulty in working out an answer to the question of what we should do with nuclear weapons is that there are at least three different realms of discourse that offer overlapping answers to what is still a single practical question. These realms of discourse start with different assumptions, utilize different concepts, are employed by different experts, and are addressed to different audiences. All too often, they also reach different and conflicting conclusions, though this is more often the result of divisions within disciplines than of divisions among disciplines. The three major realms of discourse are: the moral-religious, the technical-strategic, and the political.

The difficulties of bringing these three realms of discourse together to produce a unified statement are considerable, and it would be idle to pretend that the present document has surmounted them all. There are three points that I find particularly troublesome. The first is "a traditional principle of Catholic theology," which is invoked at a key point in the argument against first use of nuclear weapons. The statement says: "When the welfare of people is involved spiritually and temporally, an obligation exists that the safest possible moral course be followed in a situation." There are four problems with this appeal to principle. First, the principle is taken out of its context in traditional moral theology, where it is invoked to resolve uncertainties on matters of fact, especially in the administration of the sacraments. Second, as offered in its new context, the principle is too broad to be plausible. Am I morally obliged to fly to New York instead of driving because I have statistical evidence that flying is safer? Third, when there are two or more distinct dangers to be avoided, as for instance a devastating nuclear attack on a city and the loss of political self-determination, the principle can yield contradictory conclusions. The safest possible course with regard to Scylla may take the ship right into Charybdis. Fourth, it is not clear why the principle, if true and relevant, is not used more generally, for instance, against all use or production of nuclear weapons. My intention here is not so much to challenge the conclusion of no first use (nor to endorse it), but to register dissatisfaction with the way the argument is made.

A second point of difficulty is the assumption that the complete abolition of all nuclear weapons is the desirable objective of disarmament policy. In fact, at one point, the text even broadens this to include non-nuclear weapons, affirming that "there can be no place for weapons—especially modern weapons of mass destruction—in the world of peaceful reconciliation toward which we strive." This has a certain tautological attractiveness to it; but surely the key question is what is the best regime that we can establish under something like present conditions of human motivation and international order. We are not likely to have the time or the opportunity or the concrete imagination to do more than that. The document is so keen on total abolition as the ultimate goal that it gives little indication of what we can count as morally significant stages in arms control or of reasons why arms control agreements even at relatively high force levels might count as morally valuable. It is more important to avoid doing the great evils that can be done with nuclear weapons than to eliminate entirely the danger and the fear of such things (though the latter is important and valuable).

Third, in the crucial third part of the statement, universal principles about use, threat, and possession of nuclear weapons are proposed with an implicit and understandable focus on U.S.-Soviet conflicts and with very little regard to the problems created by actual or potential nuclear proliferation. Since it would be very difficult to work through the complex scenarios and the diversity of views about the effects of nuclear weapons on international order, the best move may be to offer the principles and the arguments for them in a way which stresses their applicability to the case of U.S.-Soviet hostilities, which is, after all, the case of central interest to the American bishops as moral teachers.

THE BISHOPS' STATEMENT makes a useful contribution to dialogue between people concerned with the development of nuclear strategy and people similarly concerned with moral and religious values, and it avoids any kind of imperialistic moralism. But it needs to be complemented by a great deal more reflection on the intersection between moral and political considerations. In the moral dialogue and in the planning of peace and disarmament groups, there has to be more thought given to two points in particular.

The first has been raised by various conservative critics of earlier statements by American bishops. It is the general fail-

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ure of their statements to advert to the character of the adversary. Moral justifications and criticisms of national security policy should be based both on general assessments of the dangers present in the international system and on a realistic assessment of the resources, policies, and intentions of the principal adversary, the Soviet Union. The difficulties of achieving an assessment which is not distorted by ideological phobias or benevolent illusions are enormous. Obviously, one-sided moral estimates of the Soviet system and of American democracy can be misused to support a form of ideological holy war, and this should be avoided. But what often gets neglected in moral denunciations of nuclear weapons is the question of the moral weight to be given to our preservation as a free political community and, secondarily to our government's freedom to act in our interest on specific issues. Clearly, this can be neither an absolute nor a trivial value; and the moral importance of political order is in fact affirmed in a general way in the statement. But this is a notion which needs to be brought more precisely and more critically into debates about whether and how to resist various Soviet threats.

The other area where moral and political realms of discourse need to be brought together is the question of how the concern for peace and disarmament is to be grafted onto the main stalk of American political life. Here especially the laity should lead on an ecumenical basis. If the most urgent task confronting the world is to avoid the actual use of nuclear weapons, then we are dealing with a practical demand which may or may not be met by ever more comprehensive denunciations of nuclear weapons, but which will certainly require a shrewd and effective political strategy. The point is not to achieve a theoretically correct position on the issue but to bring about a resolution or de-escalation or avoidance of potential nuclear conflict. Careful attention to the linking of peace and disarmament issues to other concerns (the economy, the federal deficit, the security of Israel, unemployment) is necessary both for the building of a politically effective coalition and to avoid the isolation of groups that take peace issues seriously. The bishops, if they approve the document in something like its present form, will likely experience some efforts by the Reagan administration to sentence them to the periphery of public debate. The administration, while relieved that the bishops do not come out in total opposition to nuclear weapons, will be unhappy with the criticism of current deterrent policy and with the position against first use of nuclear weapons. The bishops are likely to go through a period which will test their determination to persist in speaking out in a politically sensitive area. They need to show both skill and perseverance in avoiding partisanship while at the same time dealing with dismissive comments and pressures to neutralize them.

The church itself needs both to teach and to learn in a broad and continuing debate involving all three realms of discourse. If the statement is adopted in something like its present form, it will provide all participants in the current arms debate with an important interpretation of the issues from a standpoint that is both Catholic and American.

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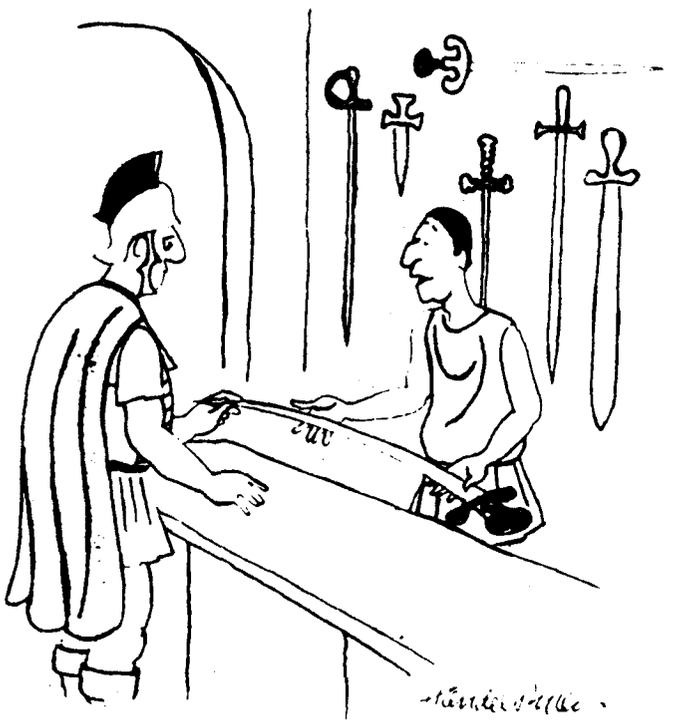

"With this model, in the event of peace you simply remove the upper part and it's a ploughshare, with no beating."

WILLIAM V. SHANNON

If not nuclear deterrence, then a conventional one?

THE FIRST DRAFT of the bishops' pastoral letter on peace and war is an attractive document if only for its unremitting effort to be honest and fair. Since nuclear war would almost certainly extinguish civilization, it is a subject that invites one to take an extreme position. At one pole, there is the determination to stop at nothing and to spend anything that may required to keep up with the Russians or even, if possible, ahead of them in the invention and production of weapons of nuclear terror. At the other pole, there is the conviction that pacifism or at least the total rejection of all nuclear weapons is the only sane policy to keep mankind alive.

There are Christians to be found clustered about each pole. There are conscientious Christians who work as military officers, scientists, and civilian officials on nuclear weapons programs. There are equally conscientious Christians who devote all or part of their daily lives to propagating the cause of

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pacifism. As befits spiritual leaders who have immortal souls in their care, the bishops in their draft letter have words of consolation, encouragement, and concern for both sets of Christians.

The bishops, however, devote most of their letter to those—which would probably include the great majority of us—who do not feel comfortable at either pole. The unrelenting pursuit of military and scientific supremacy over the Russians seems to lead into a terrifying downward spiral, yet there is something about the pacifist position that does not wholly square with our experience of reality in everyday life. Too many of us have escaped this choice by taking no position and finding sanctuary behind the oldest defense of all: a denial that the problem exists or, if it does, that we personally can do anything about it.

Many of the bishops may themselves have been guilty of this simple escapism; as a group, they have not been in the forefront of those thinking and speaking out on the agonizing problems of nuclear war. But whatever their evasiveness in the past, they have now taken their courage in their hands and entered into the nightmare world of the nuclear strategists and the deterrence theorists. Recognizing that they are laymen on military issues and recognizing, too, that the church's traditional doctrine of a just war was developed when wars were neither nuclear nor total, the bishops nevertheless apply their theological and scriptural knowledge and their intelligence to this awesome problem and try to think their way through it.

They conclude that the strategy of nuclear deterrence which the United States and its allies have followed for many years is marginally tolerable. But at the same time, they raise moral obstacles to that strategy—as it is now conceived—that would seem to require its radical revision. They state: "We do not perceive any situation in which the deliberate initiation of nuclear warfare, on whatever restricted a scale, can be condoned. Non-nuclear attacks must be deterred by other than nuclear means."

The existing strategy of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization presupposes that if the allied forces were unable to withstand a massive conventional attack by the Russian army, they could resort to nuclear weapons. The bishops would rule out this possibility.

On paper, there is no reason why Western Europe which has almost as many people as Russia and which is far wealthier and technologically more advanced could not defend itself by conventional weapons. That is doubly true when it can call upon the back-up manpower of Canada and the United States. But, in reality, Europeans are only slightly less terrified of a conventional war than they are of a nuclear war. Americans who have not fought a war on their own soil since the Civil War ended in 1865 make a much sharper disjunction between nuclear and non-nuclear wars than Europeans do. As matters now stand, Europeans are not prepared to pay the taxes needed for more extensive conventional armed forces or to limit the freedom of their young people in order to maintain greater numbers of conscripted troops. Unless the Europeans are prepared to do so, they cannot plausibly relinquish the dangerous right to resort to nuclear weapons. They have not faced up to the cruel reality that they face an adversary capable of fighting either a conventional or a nuclear war.

Nor have the American people or the bishops faced up to that reality. We unwisely abolished the draft in Nixon's time. The bishops in this document do not confront the draft issue squarely. Instead, they cite their statement of 1980 when President Carter and Congress revived registration for selective service. That statement supported the principle of registration but cautioned that the actual drafting of young men should be reserved for a time of national emergency. But if the moral issues of existing nuclear strategy are as grave as the bishops perceive them to be, does not the emergency already exist?

I agree with the bishops' prudence in leaving open the question as to whether nuclear weapons may be employed under any circumstances. I would also agree with the bishops' further, more specific judgment that "if nuclear weapons may be used at all, they may be used only after they have been used against our own country or our allies and, even then, only in an extremely limited, discriminating manner against military targets."

But if we are going to try to rein in the nuclear horses to that extent, then I think we have to work hard and work quickly to create conventional military forces that would serve as a convincing deterrent to a Russian conventional attack. Otherwise, we are placing more confidence in the self-restraint of Russian leaders than I or a a majority of Americans would probably be willing to place. In the absence of credible conventional forces, there is the strong likelihood that the whole effort to rein in the nuclear horses—whether it be an effort to achieve a nuclear freeze or a pledge of no first use of nuclear weapons—will falter and fail for lack of sufficient public support.

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JOAN CHITTESTER

Stepping tentatively between prophetism & nationalism

AS I READ this first and, I hope, truly preliminary draft of the American bishops' pastoral letter on peace and war, I found myself dealing repeatedly with two apparently disassociated but perhaps complementary images. The first is the image from Greek mythology of Penelope, the wife and presumed widow of the hero Odysseus, who attempts to delay the disaster of an arranged remarriage by agreeing to go through with the ceremony once the shroud on which she labored was completed. Then she set about weaving all day

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and tearing out stitches all night in order to buy more time for Odysseus's return and so to avoid a confrontation with those men who planned the obliteration of life as she knew and loved it. I remembered, too, a televised interview with an army officer at the rim of an incinerated village in Vietnam. The officer looked back at the scorched and gutted community and explained: "We had to destroy it in order to save it." There is in this first writing of a pastoral on peace and war a sense of hoping that something terrible will go away if we simply go on as we are; a toleration for the intolerable that is so deep in the bloodstream that we can no longer recognize our own moral inconsistencies or the nationalization of our theology.

At the same time, I sensed a deep and sincere struggle. No one comes to positions on the great questions of our time easily, nor it seems do bishops. Nevertheless, the very fact that the body of bishops is addressing the issue at all is potent sign of the relevance and authenticity of the Gospel, reason for great hope. The fact of the matter is that if the church of our country does nothing in the face of planned planetary destruction, then that sin of silence may well be the basis for the second, and more likely last, holocaust of the century. In that case the church, not the Gospel, will have failed.

The purpose of this response is to record faithfully what the present document generated in me as a reader who is just as sincerely attempting to reconcile the life of Jesus with the present state of both the world and the church. In an ecumenical, interdisciplinary study of contemporary Christianity about to be published by the Ecumenical and Cultural Research Institute of St. John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota, fifty-five percent of all the Christians polled and thirty-two percent of the Catholics in the study say that church teaching about war is unclear. My fear is that this document, as it now stands, will do little to dispel the confusion. It steps tentatively between prophetism and nationalism. It is often in tension with itself. It gives direction on the one hand, and clouds it on the other.

Here are concepts in the letter which I think need to be clarified and convictions that need to be considered.

The Sign of Jesus. The document draws a strong image of Jesus as the son of God whose mission and life was reconciliation and peace. It reminds us that Jesus did not threaten or retaliate against his enemies, that he did not permit his followers to take up arms in his behalf, that his non-violent approach to enemies was not without cost and that the ministry of Jesus is the ministry of the church. The document is so convincing that peace is a Christian mandate and Gospel risk that one expects this same document to model that. Instead, it is often a defense of war.

The Sign of the Early Church. The document reminds us that for three centuries the early church forbade Christians to be part of the Roman army on the grounds that violence was non-Christian and military service to defend the emperor, a kind of idolatry. It fails, however, to recognize that the willingness to obliterate a people or planet for the sake of national interest or political structures is itself a new idolatry and a breach of the concept of a universal church.

World Interests. The document asserts the need for world government or controls but then itself reasserts nationalism in an age in which, for all practical purposes, nationalism has been defunct for decades. No nation is any longer so isolated, so superior, or so self-sufficient that the arbitrary interests of one do not somehow spell destruction for itself as well as for the others whose interests it disregards.

Conscientious Objection. The document does a great service by reaffirming the validity of conscientious objection in the Roman Catholic tradition. It even introduces the concept of selective conscientious objection, the right of a Christian to refuse to serve in a single war or perform a single military duty on the basis that that particular war or task is unjust or immoral. On the other hand, the document lays a heavy burden on the backs of eighteen-year-old Christians and seems to expect of them what the bishops are apparently not willing to do themselves: to call nuclear war unequivocally immoral and so too the manufacture, stockpiling, and operation of nuclear weapons.

Theological Development. The document recognizes the theological validity of pacifism and the specious nature of a "deterrent" that itself escalates world tension, squanders resources that could otherwise be used to enhance the quality of life, and threatens the very existence of the planet and peoples it sets out to defend. At the same time, the document reaffirms the "just-war theory" despite the fact that the suicidal effect of nuclear confrontation is clearly out of all proportion to any political good that can be done; that discrimination between combatants and non-combatants in both the short- and long-term effects of the bomb is impossible at the outset; and that the policy of national conscription puts soldiers themselves in the category of the innocent. The document calls us "to think of war in an entirely new way" and then does not do that.

Sense of Responsibility. In its better parts, the document questions the entire deterrence argument; calls for a sense of universal social justice that will make war unnecessary; outlaws the use of nuclear weaponry in first-strike operations, in obliteration bombing, and even as a retaliatory action "which would take many wholly innocent lives"; and declares that even the threat to use nuclear weapons is wrong. The document calls for a cessation of further nuclear weapons development and the reduction of existing weapons. It reminds us that there is such a thing as national sin and that the United States itself has need to remember its own "moral outrages" and the "sinful reality of the arms race." It asks for a spiritual regime of abstinence and prayer to recall us to the danger and evil of a nuclear mindset. It requires a strong educational program in the theology of peace and reminds every Catholic of their personal responsibility, wherever they are, to turn the country away from nuclear sin and remember the created unity of all peoples. At the same time, it justifies the nuclear industry; it fails to relate the manufacture of nuclear weapons to the inevitability of nuclear war; it "tolerates" the present national nuclear policy on the grounds that there may be a worse evil than the destruction of the human race or civilized life as we know it. The document talks about "a political and moral

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dilemma" but sounds a great deal more like an American military apologia than it does a great Christian declaration on human life.

AS A RESULT, the pastoral, whose intention, I am sure, is to sound the warning and call the halt to the greatest moral danger of the ages, is itself morally schizophrenic. No matter how you read it, the double messages are clear. The document now says in separate places: We can tolerate nukes, but not for long. We can have them, but not use them. We can use them, but we can't use them first. We can't use them first, but we can't use them to retaliate either. We can use them but not on civilians though military installations abound in the midst of the great cities of the world. We can use them if we control them, but they can't be controlled. We can use them as a deterrent, but they themselves may well be the cause of war.

Most of all, the document undermines the credibility of other episcopal statements. The bishops claim that nuclear destruction and policy are repugnant to them but say it is impossible to be morally absolute in their repudiation of the manufacture or use of nuclear weapons because there is enough need for deterrence and enough doubt about their effects to command their toleration. It is troublesome to note that the bishops show no such hesitation or ambivalence about abortion. In that case from a given principle they draw universal and absolute implications with ease. Catholic hospitals may not permit abortions; Catholic doctors may not perform them; Catholic nurses may not assist at them; Catholic monies may not be used to sponsor abortion clinics. Nevertheless, the arguments for abortion are the same: the promotion of a greater good and the deterrence of evil for the parents or a handicapped child itself, for instance. What is a woman to think? That when life is in the hands of a woman, then to destroy it is always morally wrong, never to be condoned, always a grave and universal evil? But when life is in the hands of men, millions of lives at one time, all life at one time, then destruction can be theologized and some people's needs and lives can be made more important than other people's needs and lives? It is a theological imperative that we confront this dichotomy.

"It seems we're settling the tribal squabble like civilized people."

My hope is that in the final draft of this much needed pastoral, the bishops will complete the prophetic work they have begun. Let them say a clear no to nuclear war and the possession and manufacture of nuclear weapons as well. Let them call Christians to their actual moral responsibility to bring the world back from the brink of its own holocaust. Let them do something effective to deter us from destroying ourselves for our own good. Let them not weave a theology of life with one hand and unravel it with the other. Let them not be like the prophets of the court in times past who said what the government wanted to hear them say but in the saying of it led whole nations to death.

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PHILIP ODEEN

A document that is troubling —in two ways

THE BISHOPS' DRAFT PASTORAL letter on peace and war is an impressive document and, to a person who has been directly involved in national security matters, a troubling one. It is troubling in two ways. First, because I have questions about some of its major premises. Second, because it forced me to rethink some of my convictions about defense planning and arms control. Given the richness of the document, I had many reactions. But space limits force me to focus my comments in a few areas.

Let me first touch on my questions. My major concern is the heavy emphasis on pacifism, especially in the early portions of the letter. Pacifism may have a role in some situations and for some people. I will leave that debate to the theologians. But like most Americans, it is hard for me to imagine that the greater good would be served by a pacifist policy given Soviet military actions in Hungary and Afghanistan, or Moscow's suppression of the Poles and the Czechs. Nor would the church be likely to thrive considering its treatment at the hands of the Soviet and Chinese governments. I am at a loss to think of cases where non-resisting nations did anything other than suffer when they were in the way of aggressive, imperialistic powers.

The letter asserts, "History has demonstrated that an upward spiral even in conventional arms, and a continuing, unbridled increase in armed forces, rather than securing true peace, is provocative of war." History also reveals cases

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where build-ups did not lead to war, and others where, without a build-up (or where only one side built a strong military force) wars took place. While I don't wish to defend an arms race, the authors should test such assertions carefully, even though they seem superficially plausible.

Moreover, despite the continuing U.S./Soviet arms competition, the picture is not totally bleak.

- The U.S. spends a far smaller share of its GNP on military programs today (about 6 percent) than it did in the 1950s and 1960s (8 to 10 percent).
- The total *megatonnage* (destructive power) of both the U.S. and Soviet strategic forces is down significantly compared to ten to fifteen years ago even though the *number* of weapons has increased sharply.
- Serious arms control negotiations are underway, covering both theater level and strategic nuclear forces.
- Both the U.S. and the USSR are observing the SALT II agreements even though they are not technically in force.

Second, the pastoral letter is sharply critical of traditional American nuclear deterrence policy. In part I differ with the letter's approach on the basis of our experience and in part because I believe it incorrectly portrays the main thrust of our strategic nuclear policy over the past twenty years.

Whether one is comfortable or not with deterrence as a strategy, it has been a success. The thirty-seven years since the end of World War II have been far from peaceful. But, in large part due to the deterrent effect of nuclear weapons, the U.S. and the USSR have avoided conflict despite sharp confrontations. Europe has been peaceful for nearly four decades, and the deterrent of American nuclear weapons must get some of the credit. The threat of nuclear war has also helped contain conflicts in the Middle East and Korea that could easily have escalated.

The letter questions the morality of attempting to deter non-nuclear attacks with nuclear weapons. Many experts share this concern, for practical political and military reasons as well as for reason of ethics. The American defense establishment has been trying for twenty years to reduce NATO's reliance on nuclear weapons and to raise the "nuclear threshold." The strongest opposition to the recent article in *Foreign Affairs* proposing a no-first-use doctrine came from Europeans. American objections were largely based on the concern that our NATO allies would not be willing to face up to the costs of the conventional force improvements that would be required. If the bishops wish to push a "no-first-use" policy a letter to the French, Dutch, Belgian, and German bishops may be in order.

Finally, the letter misrepresents the mainline of American nuclear strategy. It seems to accept the caricature of mutual assured destruction, derided by some with the acronym MAD. Our nuclear policy and programs are not built around threats to attack cities, nor is our nuclear targeting focused on killing Soviet civilians. The real focus has been on deterrence through Soviet awareness that even if they launched a massive, surprise first strike, we would be able in retaliation to destroy much of the Soviet military machine, industrial targets critical to its military power, and the Communist party structure that started the war. Casualties would doubtless be heavy and millions of civilians would die. But the focus of our strategy and targeting is Soviet military power, not Soviet population. This approach has dominated American strategic thinking. The only dissents came from a small minority on the right pushing "war-winning" approaches or an equally small minority on the left (usually extreme arms control advocates) who favor an obviously immoral, minimal nuclear capability only able to threaten large Soviet population centers in a retaliatory strike.

The most useful contribution of the letter, to me, was its heavy emphasis on the urgency of arms control and the specific suggestions that are made. Those of us who have been involved in arms control for years often grow jaded on the subject. We frequently get so immersed in technical details that we lose sight of the urgent areas where arms-control measures can truly reduce the risk of war or at least ameliorate its consequences. The pastoral letter helps one raise one's sights and focus on the more central issues.

The letter had four themes that I believe are worthy of the urgent attention of our leaders and Soviet leadership as well.

1. Arms-control negotiations are not just a diplomatic exercise, an opportunity to score propaganda points or build political support. They are a deadly serious effort to reduce the risk of war or at least make its outcome less than catastrophic. Arms control has a fundamental moral basis as well as a military and diplomatic purpose.

2. While reducing the numbers and lethality of the major powers' arsenals is important, we must not lose sight of the need to eliminate destabilizing weapons and perhaps more importantly to limit the spread of nuclear weapons beyond the handful of nations that now have the technology. Nuclear proliferation certainly poses the greatest risk of nuclear war, although not the magnitude of destruction that the major powers' stockpiles could cause.

3. Although it may be too late to eliminate the current generation of nuclear weaponry, there still is time to preclude the spread of weapons into space or the renewal of the anti-ballistic missile deployment race. Other new types of weapons and mediums of employment also will be developed in the future. Limiting such an extension of nuclear arsenals should be a major goal of our arms control policy.

4. Finally, the need for progress in limiting and reducing nuclear arms is is so urgent that we must be willing to take risks, prudent risks, but risks nonetheless. No agreement can be completely foolproof and verification cannot be certain under all circumstances and scenarios. The easy way, politically and bureaucratically, is to hold out for the perfect agreement, where every eventuality is covered and all ambiguities are removed. This guarantees that nothing will be achieved. The more difficult course, and the one I believe must be followed, is to move more decisively, take some measured chances, but make progress toward the central goal of reducing the likelihood of nuclear war.

These issues are not clear-cut, and our national security

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officials labor long and hard over the choices. Moral theologians may well lose sleep over their issues, but I submit their task is easier. They have choices between right and wrong, good and bad. The choices in the defense and arms-control area are seldom of that type. In many cases, all the options are unattractive or at least morally questionable. In many ways, the challenges are more akin to those of the church hierarchy in Poland. All the choices involve some element of moral risk as well as pain and suffering for their flock. I hope the American bishops recognize that the choices of peace and war for our leaders are equally difficult.

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THOMAS J. DOWNEY

How to apply the pastoral to the real world

MY READING of the first draft of the pastoral letter on peace and war has left me with a mixture of gratification and disappointment. Gratification, because of the quality of its general thrust and because of its dramatic superiority over anything a similar project would have produced only a few years ago. Disappointment, because it chooses not to follow through with directions for specific application to the world.

The bishops write: "We cannot be content with restating general moral principles. . . . We must look at the nature of existing and planned weapons systems, the doctrines and plans that would govern their use in time of war, and the consequences of use under various conditions. In short, how our society plans and prepares for the conduct of war."

Yet I do not find the letter fulfilling this direction.

Let me now suggest a framework for doing this.

Here is the general problem:

First, superpower nuclear war would most probably, within a few hours or days, destroy the civilization man has devoted thousands of years to building.

Second, the long-term effects of superpower nuclear war will possibly render the earth uninhabitable to human life, or mammalian life, or all life. This is a subject of heated debate among scientists, and involves complex compound unknowns which cannot be resolved in advance of the event.

Third, the probability of superpower nuclear war is unacceptably high and is, for reasons I will outline, increasing.

Fourth, most importantly, *this is not a situation in which virtue is its own reward*. The morality of any act regarding nuclear war must be judged solely in terms of its effect on the probability of nuclear war. If an act has no effect, or a heightening effect, on this probability, that is what matters; the intentions of the originators of the act are of only academic interest.

Now let us move up one level of specificity. Why is the probability of superpower nuclear war rising?

1. Technological developments are tending to enable a disarming first strike by one superpower against the other—that is, to weaken the deterrent effect of potential retaliation. In the near term, this primarily concerns the ability to deliver large numbers of reliable, accurate nuclear warheads quickly, with very little warning.

2. Doctrinal developments are tending to increase the probability of nuclear war. These include the following:

Visceral hostility to arms control, and fixation on military forces as the only solution to military threats. For example, President Reagan's statement of a year ago that "The argument will be over which weapons, not whether we should forsake weapons for treaties and agreements."

Belief that there is no such thing as a bad weapon as long as the U.S. has it; failure to understand that pressuring, frightening, or inciting the Soviet Union to initiate nuclear war is not in the interest of the United States.

Desire to facilitate military expenditures by minimizing the probable consequences of nuclear war.

Compulsive fixation on "response in kind" to a Soviet attack, even when it won't work and better responses are available. Specifically, if the Soviets attack our ICBM silos and we respond against their remaining silos, there is zero probability that they will sit there and let us wipe out their unlaunched ICBMs. On the contrary, our counterattack will merely insure that their ICBMs will immediately be launched against our population and industry. Every military witness I have questioned has agreed to this, yet the requirement to attack Soviet ICBM silos continues to dominate our ICBM planning and strategic force comparisons.

Overemphasis on the national value of strategic weapons. For example, the destruction of U.S. ICBMs is equated with destruction of the U.S. Absurd as this may sound, many current U.S. strategic weapons programs are based on this assumption.

Failure to understand the danger of denigrating our military capability. President Reagan's claim of Soviet military superiority is not only incorrect; it is dangerous. If the Soviets believe we consider ourselves inferior, it becomes logical for them to believe we will retreat if pressed, and therefore to be less concerned about avoiding direct military confrontation.

3. There is decreased competence among our national decision-makers. We now have a president, vice president, secretary of defense, deputy secretary of defense, and director of Central Intelligence who came to their jobs with no knowledge of national security issues, and there is no evidence that they have dug into their subject matter.

I say this not just because of disagreement with their policies. I disagreed even more fundamentally with the counterforce theories of Nixon's Secretary of Defense James

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Schlesinger, but there was never any doubt he understood the subtleties of the nuclear equation. In contrast, Secretary Weinberger's appearances before congressional committees have demonstrated such insecure and shallow grasp of nuclear issues that most of us have abandoned serious questioning of him to avoid national embarrassment. Contemplation of the circle of civilians who would make the decisions in a nuclear crisis today is a frightening exercise.

There are, nonetheless, solutions.

First, what can be done about the technological problem? As the Reagan administration's failure to find a technically feasible ICBM basing mode is demonstrating, not all first-strike war-threatening technological threats are amenable to technological solutions. There are, however, three major arms control plans which effectively improve deterrence and lower the probability of nuclear war:

● *SALT II* would limit the number of warheads an ICBM can carry, prevent rapid reloading of ICBM silos, and eventually prevent the testing and deployment of many new weapons types.

● *The nuclear freeze* is far more effective than most of its proponents as well as opponents believe. The freeze's prohibition on deployment and production of new weapons, which has been at the center of most public controversy surrounding it, is of secondary importance. The real benefit of the freeze lies in its prohibition against *testing* of all nuclear weapons.

By thus over time lowering nuclear weapon reliability, the freeze would cause the predicted outcome of a nuclear first strike to become progressively less favorable to the attacker and less likely to be tried. The testing freeze would also prevent new first-strike weapons—the most dangerous of these is the Trident II (D5), which is the only weapon meeting my technological criterion (1) above—from being brought to the point of military utility. The freeze is, therefore, infinitely more beneficial than the administration's START or the various across-the-board reductions being proposed.

● A novel *reduction plan* by my colleague Albert Gore (D., Tenn.) would gradually eliminate first-strike weapons from the world's arsenals. It would phase out land-based MIRVs (the U.S. Minuteman II and the Soviet SS-17, SS-18, SS-19) and permit their replacement with single-warhead ICBMs (Minuteman II for the U.S. and a new ICBM type for the Soviets). New, highly accurate submarine-launched missiles including the U.S. Trident II and any Soviet equivalent would be banned altogether, as would the MX. Less accurate submarine-launched missiles such as the U.S. Trident I would be permitted, as would a certain number of long-warning bombers and cruise missiles. Thus, a short-warning attack with large numbers of accurate missiles—the essential requirement for a first strike—would be impossible.

To sum up the relationship between three plans: SALT II is a quickly available although limited first step, fully compatible with either the freeze or the Gore plan, and by its ratification would render either of the other two easier to negotiate. There is some apparent conflict between the freeze and the Gore plan, in that the latter requires new stabilizing retaliatory

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"That was very naughty, Sir Pincus. You're not supposed to USE gunpowder—it's only a deterrent."

weapons to be deployed to replace old destabilizing first-strike weapons. But the two could mesh and reinforce each other if appropriate exceptions were made to the freeze.

The Soviets have already signed SALT II and are eager to ratify it; they have unofficially expressed support for both the freeze and the Gore plan, although whether this would evaporate at the negotiating table remains to be seen. If it would not, we now face a spectacular opportunity to erase the specter of global nuclear war.

The administration opposes all three plans, as does a majority of the U.S. Senate. As a red herring, they have devised the Jackson-Warner-Carney-Broomfield "Hollywood freeze," which calls for a freeze *after* the U.S. has built up and achieved parity to the satisfaction of those overwrought missile-gap enthusiasts who have always and will always view the Soviet military as superior to ours. The sole purpose of the Hollywood freeze is to enable arms control opponents to embrace the image of arms control while opposing its reality.

HERE, THEN, is the immediate problem: The diplomatic means to neutralize the technological stimulants of nuclear war exist, but are opposed by the people with the power to implement them. Specific policy changes could be made which would radically lower the probability of nuclear war, but they will not be made by the people presently possessing the power to make them.

Therefore, the best—possibly the only—way quickly to lower the probability of nuclear war is to replace these people.

It's not difficult to identify them. By the time this is published, the House of Representatives will probably have voted on SALT II, the real freeze, and the Hollywood freeze; all senators have, by co-sponsoring or not co-sponsoring various resolutions, indicated where they stand. I suggest the following system:

For support of SALT II ratification, give two points. SALT II is double-weighted because it alone can become real arms control immediately.

For support of the real freeze, give one point.

For support of the Gore plan (may be difficult to determine), give one point.

For support of the Hollywood freeze (the Jackson-Warner

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resolution in the Senate; the Broomfield amendment in the House), *subtract* one point.

Anyone with a score of plus-one or higher is part of the solution and deserves support. Anyone with a zero or negative score is part of the problem and needs replacement—in November 1982 if possible, 1984 if not.

Is electoral action appropriate? One might as well ask if nuclear war prevention is appropriate. The one is the only practical route to the other.

The need to change quickly by changing people is even more dramatically valid if we look at the doctrinal rather than the technological factors. Weapons can be legislated; doctrine cannot. It exists in people's minds. The widest variety of the weapon-employment plans exists in the computers of the Strategic Air Command. Because they are highly classified and the public can never be sure what is or is not in them, it is futile to seek to erase certain war plans through public pressure. But the existence of an unwise war plan is no danger unless it is used. We can choose competent executive-branch decision-makers who are not attracted to suicidal strategies and will not use them.

Finally, there is the question of whether SALT II ratification followed by the freeze and/or the Gore plan is too modest a goal. Should we not, instead, concentrate on seeking an end to nuclear deterrence and to military conflict altogether?

For the present, we should not. The probability that the world will rise *above* nuclear deterrence during the next decade or two is negligible. The probability that the world will fall *below* nuclear deterrence into annihilation is thousands of times higher. To think otherwise is merely to confess that one's contacts are confined to the kind of fine people who read this fine magazine. These are not the people who now hold the power of life and death over the world.

Our immediate and essential task is to preserve deterrence by prompt, concrete, and effective electoral action.

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JAMES FINN

Discrimination is called for; dialogue is needed

ONE CAN SAY some things about the first draft of the bishops' pastoral letter on peace and war that will not need to be modified by subsequent drafts.

1. The bishops correctly assert the moral dimension of the strategic and political issues to which they address themselves. This assertion may seem so obvious as to be unnecessary. It is not. The relation between morality and our foreign policies is sometimes debated, more frequently dismissed. For example, Dean Acheson, one of our most admirable secretaries of state, declared: "The discussion of ethics or morality in our relations with other states is a prolific cause of confusion. The vocabulary of morals and ethics is inadequate to discuss or test foreign policies of states. . . . What passes for ethical standards for governmental policies in foreign affairs is a collection of moralisms, maxims, and slogans, which neither help nor guide, but only confuse. . . ." His disdain for ethical consideration in these issues is matched by those who say, in effect, that nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence are no longer political issues but are now moral issues. The implication is that one can make confident moral judgments without feeling the need to make political analyses. Both attitudes are highly visible in our national debate over nuclear weapons.

2. After more than three decades of the nuclear era — during which time there have been intensive debates on questions of modern war and there has accumulated a vast literature almost totally unmarked by contributions from American bishops — the bishops have taken up the responsibility that is theirs as religious leaders in the strongest democratic country in the world, one of the superpowers, the principal shaper of Western strategic policies.

3. The bishops acknowledge both directly and implicitly the situation of pluralism within the church. On issues of war and peace there is not *a* Catholic tradition, but Catholic traditions. And even within these different traditions, different people with different responsibilities can and do make different political/moral decisions. The pastoral letter is, therefore, one of explication and mediation among sometimes sharply different views. The bishops are highly sensitive to this demanding task.

4. By the very act of issuing this statement publicly, hoping that their judgments will be seriously considered by all Americans including government officials, the bishops acknowledge that they are addressing public issues in the public arena and that the terms of reference must be available to all. This casts a special light on those, including individual bishops, who say that they have come to reject nuclear weapons or to support unilateral nuclear disarmament or to any particular position because of a conversion, out of an act of faith. The witness these people bear is open to acceptance or rejection, scorn or admiration, but by its very nature it is not open to examination: it does not flow into public discourse which requires the application of reason to disputed policy issues.

5. The letter helps to clarify the infrequent and sometimes enigmatic statements about modern warfare that have been issued by church officials, individually and collectively over the years. For example, Francis X. Winters, S.J., a theologian who has worked on issues of war and peace for years, inferred from these earlier statements that the bishops had "formulated a position that imposes on Catholic officials of our government the burden of choosing between their consciences as illuminated by church teaching, and their professional careers and commitments. . . ." The present pastoral confirms that this inference is clearly overextended. The bishops — even if they could — have done no such thing.

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6. The bishops have initiated a very good process for what they describe as an "invitation to moral direction, dialogue, and growth." As one of those invited to appear before the committee that is primarily responsible for the draft of the pastoral letter, I can testify that the initial hearings were serious, informed, open, probing. The final form of the pastoral letter will, one assumes, remain an invitation to further public dialogue in which all Americans can participate. This much is excellent.

BUT WHAT of the document itself? For brevity's sake, I will overleap the strong points of the bishops' statement to express some reservations that I think others would share.

To begin with, the word peace is used with high equivocation throughout the document. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you." So Jesus promised. But the peace which is the antonym to war — which we have a right to expect in a letter on war and peace — is not the peace which passes all understanding but the peace of an ordered political community. In the public realm on issues of foreign policy we address ourselves not to ultimate issues but, at best, to penultimate issues. We can, of course, proclaim our ultimate values but we cannot do a fast shuffle between these and political values simply by using the term peace equivocally.

Possibly because of this equivocation, the document lacks a developed statement about what a properly ordered international community would be; that community which would most nearly guarantee peace and inhibit war; that community which, established as a goal, would help us discern the paths to get there. This is not impossible to do. The model is *Pacem in Terris*. The specific suggestions that are in the document need to be placed in a larger political framework.

In addition, there is little discussion of the major obstacles which lie between our present situation and that ordered political community except in terms of weapons systems and the disparity between the well-off and the poor — and those two obstacles are considered in a historical manner. There is, for example, no consideration of the springs of production behind the great and unprecedented wealth that has been produced in the last several centuries. In line with current conventional wisdom the emphasis is on more even distribution of present wealth, not on increasing the production.

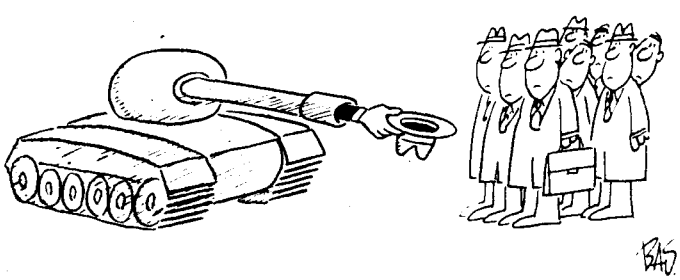
About weapon systems the bishops point out that the United States was the first to produce and use atomic weapons. They do not mention that the United States offered a plan for international control of such weapons before others had them. And they state that "Soviet nuclear weapons provide fully as great a threat to humanity as do our own." Either this statement is abstracted from the present, concrete historical situation in which we must now make our decisions or it implies that there is not only a technical symmetry between the superpowers but a moral symmetry as well. Acknowledging that Soviet leaders have been prudently cautious about the dangers of deterrence and its possible failure, one must still admit that they have continued to build massive armaments when we have slowed down, that they have continued to extend their empire by military force, and that they are unconstrained by public opinion including that of their own citizens. The Soviet Union is a tyranny and behaves tyrannically. An analysis that fails to make the necessary moral distinctions between the democracies, with all their faults and limitations, and the Soviet bloc cannot accurately set forth the circumstances within which we must make decisions about a governed international community nor can it offer the full moral basis for the NATO deterrent system.

Finally, the document does allow moral legitimacy to nuclear deterrence, but in a way that will, I believe, confuse many readers. In his message to the UN on June 11, 1982 John Paul II said: "In current conditions 'deterrence' based on balance, certainly not as an end in itself but as a step on the way toward progressive disarmament, may still be judged morally acceptable. Nonetheless in order to ensure peace, it is indispensable not to be satisfied with this minimum which is always susceptible to the real danger of explosion."

The American bishops arrive at a similar conclusion but with additional restrictions. They outline a "marginally justifiable deterrent policy" that is "at odds with elements of current deterrent policy. . . ." Whatever the merit of that conclusion, the moral arguments by which the bishops arrive there are murky.

For example, although they recognize the paradox of deterrence—the threat of nuclear weapons is what most strongly inhibits their use — in terms of moral judgment they sometimes, but not always, equate the two. And while they state that deterrence "raises serious moral questions about whether one can ever threaten what one does not intend" they give a mixed response. The result is confusing. In order to give due credit to what the bishops have attempted and accomplished here and what they have failed to do, full analysis of this most grave and complex issue would be necessary. I will select only one of their italicized statements to highlight an element of confusion in their moral argument: "*Our objections to the use of nuclear weapons against civilians and to the initiation of nuclear warfare apply equally to the threat of such use.*"

Equally? Surely not. I know that I, like most people who will read this, have been the target of nuclear weapons for some years. I regard that threat to my life as a material and moral evil. But I do not regard it as evil as being blown up. The threat is evil, but it is obviously a lesser evil. This discrimination is called for; it is largely absent in this document. The bishops are surely right, however, to say that even the threat is a great evil, that nuclear deterrence is unreliable — no one can guarantee that it will not fail — and that we must "move



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toward authentic peace through nuclear arms control, reductions and disarmament." But this, and other concrete acts the bishops suggest for the "waging of peace" make all the more evident the need of the overarching framework within which these acts can be considered. It is this framework, which would be based on a proper understanding of the limited peace that an international community could provide, that needs to be developed. If not in this particular pastoral letter, then in another. The response to this letter will, I am confident, demonstrate that the dialogue the bishops have here initiated should continue.

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GORDON C. ZAHN

Disaster, no; disappointment, yes

THE GOOD WORD first. The proposed draft of the November pastoral is unquestionably the strongest statement yet by the American hierarchy in opposition to nuclear weapons and nuclear war. Moreover, its overall thrust is such that it offers real promise of future statements (and, one may hope, actions as well) leading ultimately to a final and definitive condemnation of these instruments of omnicide, including their possession and production. It repeats and strengthens previous condemnations of the use and of the threat to use such weapons, specifically extending those condemnations to retaliatory use and—an important challenge to existing national policy—to first use under any circumstances. It supports the principle of unilateral initiatives as an effective step toward disarmament and gives new emphasis to the spiritual bases for rejecting nuclear war coupled with the urgent need to discover and develop a more relevant theology of peace and nonviolence. The legitimacy of conscientious objection and the need to amend Selective Service legislation to permit selective conscientious objection are reaffirmed and find strong reinforcement in the pastoral recommendations. Finally, the draft's discussion of consequences and alternatives, even considering the criticisms to be offered here, testifies to the broad range of opinion surveyed in the committee's desire to produce a statement on war and peace that would be informed, balanced, and firmly rooted in Christian spirit and doctrine. In these and many other respects, it succeeds.

If not, therefore, at all the "disaster" some critics have claimed, the statement is nonetheless a disappointment for those like myself who hoped for more explicit moral guidance, free from ambiguities, reservations, and exceptions that have always been too much a part of episcopal statements on this most crucial moral issue of our time, perhaps of all remaining time. At fault is not only what is left unsaid and undone, but the draft pastoral (reluctantly and presumably temporarily) also accepts policies of nuclear deterrence which seem to contradict, in spirit at least, what has gone before. In doing this, the bishops admit to being skeptical of claims that the existing deterrent prevents the use of nuclear weapons, but they give these claims the benefit of the doubt. No serious consideration is given the contrary thesis, namely that reliance upon the deterrent has produced the "balance of terror" which creates and sustains the international tensions threatening the world with annihilation.

The impression is one of troubled ambivalence and a yearning for a compromise on essentially irreconcilable issues. There is, for instance, the apparent readiness to allow weapons presumably limitable to strictly military targets. This is a kind of updated version of the old "two-battleships-at-sea" scenario which has always been trundled out to forestall any judgment on nuclear weapons as intrinsically immoral. One might have hoped that the bishops would base their moral judgment on *the most likely use* as demonstrated by officially declared intent. In this case the facts are clear enough: the overwhelming majority of these weapons are designed and many are already targeted for use against cities; that is, for acts defined by Vatican II as an offense against God and man himself. Furthermore, even if the so-called tactical weapons could be (or would be!) put to such limited use, the unknowable dangers to the environment should be enough to merit condemnation in any event.

The draft pastoral's basic weakness lies in its perspective. Writing in these pages over a year ago, J. Bryan Hehir commended the Physicians for Social Responsibility for restricting their activity to areas of their own special competence and not losing themselves in what he called "the arcane details of the strategic debate." Theologians and bishops too, would do well to heed this advice. When this document speaks in terms of moral principle and the obligations it may impose, the words ring true. When it strays off into calculating possible policy alternatives to nuclear deterrence, the way to calamity lies open. Cautious disclaimers notwithstanding, there is too easy a readiness to settle for a trade-off in the form of greater reliance on conventional weapons and expanded forces, even—and this is a shocking departure from the church's consistent position since the time of Benedict XV—including peacetime conscription. Given the historical lesson that most conventional warfare has long since passed all bounds of moral justification in its means, this is simply too great a concession for the bishops to make. World War II and the "terror bombings" which destroyed most of Europe's great cities, the horrors of a "little" war like Vietnam, and now Lebanon—these were all accomplished by "conventional" military action.

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This is not to criticize the obvious, and quite legitimate, concern that the relevant moral teachings be considered in the context of empirical situations and the dilemmas they present. Rather, it is to question what seems to be a reversal of priorities and roles in doing so. We have a right to look to the bishops for their moral judgment of what is actually being done and being planned, whether it be continued reliance upon MAD, the proposed shift to counterforce and its first-strike implications, or whatever. It is *not* their responsibility to fashion alternative strategies; it is the task of the diplomatic and military functionaries to devise policies and strategies that meet acceptable moral standards. The appearance of such experts before the Bernardin committee should have been the occasion for probing into the justifications offered for past and current policies—not, as was more likely the case, to solicit their advice as to what the bishops should say in fulfilling their responsibility to provide the faithful with adequate moral guidance.

Daniel Ellsberg's challenging and well-documented introduction to *Protest and Survive* (Monthly Review Press paperback, $4.95) reveals that the United States has been "using" nuclear weapons for the past thirty-five years and that all the recent presidents (with the possible exception of Ford) approved the policies of "nuclear blackmail" we so freely attribute to Soviet intentions. Are our bishops prepared to tolerate the continuation of this increasingly hazardous game of bluff? This is what is at stake in their apparent willingness, reluctant and contingent though it may be, to go along with possession and continued production of nuclear weapons for the time being.

Despite the fact that Cardinal Krol's widely cited testimony to the Senate is now three-years-old, and that there has been nothing to indicate it had the slightest effect upon national policy, we find the same rationale incorporated in this draft document. Were it not for massive European demonstrations and our own nuclear-freeze movement (neither of which, strangely enough, is mentioned—much less endorsed as one might have hoped), the Reagan policies would still be moving in a direction diametrically opposite to that called for by the cardinal. For the proposed pastoral to content itself with repeating that reluctant acquiescence to the deterrent "paradox," with nothing more than the pious hope that progress will be made toward disarmament in the undefined interim, would be a welcome signal to our policymakers that there is no discernible danger that the bishops' patience will be wearing thin in the foreseeable future.

As one privileged to testify before the Bernardin committee, I did not expect that my pacifist position would be adopted. Thus for the reasons indicated at the beginning of this critique, I am generally well satisfied with the tone and the thrust of the draft document. At the same time I fear its failings are substantial and could prove fatal, in the literal as well as the rhetorical sense of that term. Even the slightest indication of willingness to condone the possession and production of weapons that are admittedly immoral to use or even to threaten to use can only undermine the credibility of the entire document and negate its inspirational appeal for a new and fuller commitment to "the Gospel vision."

At some point the question must be faced: can we as Christians, can bishops as bishops, tolerate, even reluctantly, continued dependence on nuclear deterrence for any "period of grace" at all? If we apply the familiar cliché and agree that the surest way for evil to triumph is for those who know the good to tolerate the evil in silence, the answer should be obvious. For all of the welcome advances this document represents in tone and thrust, it fails to confront the evil which, as Jonathan Schell has shown, is pushing us beyond genocide, beyond omnicide, to the point where the future itself is foreclosed.

Theological technicalities aside, there are times when a prophetic word must be spoken even if there is no one willing to listen or follow. Those of us who have criticized German Christians and their bishops for failing to mount an effective witness against Auschwitz and all it meant have a responsibility to urge our own bishops to go further than this pastoral proposes, and to oppose the hundreds, perhaps thousands, of instant Auschwitzes that are already waiting to be committed in our name.

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WILLIAM J. NAGLE

Hard work & scholarship still need to be done

CONFRONTED DURING the Eisenhower years with the development of the hydrogen bomb and a defense policy that placed almost complete reliance on "massive retaliation," most U.S. Catholics reacted with the same deaf-mute apathy as their fellow citizens.

No one tried harder to jolt the people out of their apathy than Thomas E. Murray, an Atomic Energy Commissioner from 1950 to 1957 who was frequently described as the "conscience of the Commission." A close friend, adviser, and sometime speech writer was the Jesuit, John Courtney Murray. They were not related. In the fascinating and very discreet collaboration between this high government official and the most brilliant theologian in the American Catholic church, it would be difficult to assess which one more strongly influenced the other. What we do know is that their collaboration produced

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some of the most cogent moral statements of that era.

Were they still alive, how would these pioneers—frustrated as they were in their attempts to influence either church or state on the horrendous moral problems of nuclear war—react to the draft of the American bishops' pastoral letter on peace and war?

Because such a pastoral letter would have seemed inconceivable to them in 1956 or 1960, they would probably be amazed that the American bishops have achieved the degree of consensus that they apparently have in 1982. In the fifties, not a single U.S. bishop spoke out on this issue. Father Murray, muzzled by his church from expressing himself more fully on questions of religious liberty and church and state, would doubtless be impressed that the present generation of U.S. bishops are secure enough in their identity as both churchmen and Americans that they can question defense policy without fear of sounding unpatriotic. (In the fifties, when the two Murrays began writing and speaking on this subject, the NCWC News Service still routinely carried stories on any Catholic awarded the Medal of Honor.) In the fifties and for sometime after, the bishops' fear of sounding unpatriotic was coupled with an awareness of the evils of Communism so acute that the bishops were apparently reluctant to judge the morality of the means used to oppose the Soviet Union, or North Vietnam for that matter.

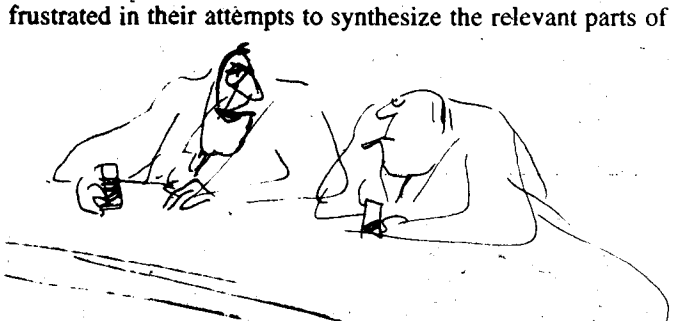
The two Murrays would probably be pleased with the pastoral letter. Recognizing it for the consensus document that it is, they would not be surprised at the number of qualifications, the occasional fuzziness. They would know that a drafting committee including both Bishop Thomas J. Gumbleton and Bishop John J. O'Connor would have to accommodate differing viewpoints and emphasis in ways the reader can divine only when the usually clear prose becomes ponderous and tortured. The Murrays would doubtless also be glad never to have to lead one of the recommended parish-level discussions on the letter's handling of the specific topic of deterrence. "Would you run through that one again, Father."

But the Murrays would be surprised and perhaps a bit concerned by the process used by the bishops to produce the document. It is possible that the description of the process at the end of the pastoral does not do it justice. If papers were commissioned on certain subject areas, the document does not say so. Professor Bruce Martin Russett of Yale is cited as "principal author" and Father J. Bryan Hehir and Edward Doherty of the U.S. Catholic Conference Office of International Justice and Peace are listed as staff to the committee. The same section lists thirty-five "witnesses" who appeared before the drafting committee in fourteen sessions.

At the time the Murrays were writing and speaking on the moral problems of modern warfare, neither was asking for such a letter from the pope or the bishops. Impressed as they were by the staggering complexity of the issues, they were asking that extensive interdisciplinary studies be done to lay the factual groundwork for the moral discourse that was needed. Father Murray stressed the need for a vigorous cultivation of what he termed politico-moral science. He argued that the moralist can give "no answer at all to the *quaestio juris* until the *quaestio facti* has been answered." It was that conviction that led him to meet regularly with a small group of scholars from Catholic University and Georgetown who struggled through 1958 to define the scope of such a full-scale interdisciplinary study. In this group and among all writing on the subject (except the most convinced of the pacifists) there was agreement on the need for such large-scale studies that would form the basis of the work of the moral theologians. Nothing came of these efforts and the scholars went their separate ways.

By the time of the Vatican Council, most of those same U.S. scholars would have agreed with Philip Scharper's contention in *Commonweal* of 1962 that the church did not have an adequate theology of international responsibility. As the Council entered its fourth session in 1965, Americans James Douglass, Justus George Lawler, and Gordon Zahn urged that the Council Fathers speak strongly to the world on the moral problems of modern warfare. Against their position this writer argued that in this arena, the Fathers were without *periti*, that is without experts comparable to the scripture scholars, the liturgical scholars, and theologians who had so strongly informed and influenced them in the three earlier sessions. No coherent theological viewpoint had been previously established. Recognizing that American bishops had a particularly heavy responsibility to give moral leadership on the subject of nuclear armaments, I urged that they come home and begin the arduous task of encouraging the studies, training the theologians, and informing their own consciences on these extremely difficult and complicated matters. The bishops began work a year ago on their pastoral letter with presumably little understanding that such hard work still needed to be done.

Calling government officials of present and past administrations as witnesses to elicit their views was probably an efficient means of obtaining needed information. It may not have been a very effective means to gain the best thinking of more than twenty ethicists, theologicans, international relations specialists, and other scholars who appeared, not to mention many others who did not appear. Most of those listed are Catholics; many are at Catholic universities. Some of them (William V. O'Brien, James Finn, and Gordon Zahn, for example) have devoted their scholarly lives to these subjects. Most of them, one suspects, would have been delighted to contribute *weeks* in substantive seminars set up for the benefit of the drafting committee. One can guess that such witnesses must have been frustrated in their attempts to synthesize the relevant parts of



*"What's **WRONG** with a little nuclear exchange?"*

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their life's work in a few minutes of oral testimony.

The small staff that served the committee obviously did a prodigious amount of work and a quite respectable job. But they will probably be the first to admit that the bishops themselves should have realized that at this time on this topic they had the opportunity to tap the best minds in the country. They can do it still if they make a few drafting changes which announce clearly that they know this pastoral letter is but a start and that they dedicate themselves to encouraging, even financing the scholarly work that must still be done. The vague admonition in the draft for Catholic educational institutions "to take a lead in investigating war & peace studies generally" does not reflect any firm conviction to give effective intellectual leadership. Consciousness-raising on these issues can wait no longer. But the bishops must go much further and dig much deeper if they are to have the long range moral influence on the American public and, indeed, on world opinion that they desire.

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CHARLES A. CURRAN

A complex document for a 'big church'

THE GENERAL thrust of the positions taken in this draft is not surprising. It is in keeping with past statements by the Second Vatican Council, by recent popes, and by the American bishops themselves. From all these sources it is evident that the American Catholic bishops would adopt the just war principle but also would admit the legitimacy and role of pacifism. Likewise, the past statements have called for an end to the arms race but have not demanded unilateral nuclear disarmament. The deterrent can be tolerated as long as there is hope of reducing and ending the nuclear arms race.

The draft develops through a series of six points or principles which set forth "interlocking ideas." Point one prohibits the use of nuclear weapons for the purpose of destroying population centers or civilian targets (the principle of discrimination) and also the use of nuclear weapons against military targets when the attacks on these targets would devastate nearby populations (the principle of proportionality). Point two prohibits any first use of any type of nuclear weapons. Point three applies these prohibitions about use to the threat of such use. One cannot morally threaten to do what points one and two say cannot be done.

Point four raises the question about the one remaining category of use—second strike (in retaliation against a nuclear attack) counterforce (as distinguished from counter-city) use. On this point Christians may differ, for the decision is not easy.I describe the proposed position of the bishops here as a reluctant noncondemnation of such use with the major problem being the difficulty of keeping the use of nuclear weapons limited. Point five justifies the deterrent based on the counter-force threat whose use is not condemned in point four. Point six then goes on to recognize that broader deterrence (e.g., counter-city) is a moral evil, but it can be tolerated (not approved). This toleration is not meant to be a comforting moral judgment but an urgent call to bring about change.

Use. The position which leaves open some use of nuclear weapons, i.e., second strike, counter-force, raises some questions. First, there seems to be a contradiction in the document itself. Point two argues against the first use of limited, counter-force nuclear weapons because of the immense difficulties in limiting escalation. The draft invokes the principle that the safest course must be followed when the spiritual or temporal welfare of people is involved. But the same problem of limitation and the same principle logically lead to the conclusion that even second strike, counter-force nuclear weapons should never be used. The reason proposed against the first use of such weapons also would seem to prohibit the second or retaliatory use of such weapons.

What is the reason for leaving open the possibility of legitimate counter-force use of nuclear weapons? In their 1976 pastoral letter *To Live in Christ Jesus* the American bishops have accepted the principle that it is wrong to *threaten* to do what morally you cannot actually do. Perhaps the bishops felt that if the present document had opposed all use, it could not justify any deterrence. Yet the document itself recognizes that one can possess nuclear weapons on the basis of toleration without having to justify their use in any circumstances. The entire point six accepts even counter-city possession and deterrence on the basis of the principle of toleration.

The same tension between justification and toleration appears elsewhere in the draft. On page 38 for instance, the draft states that "nuclear weapons are at best barely tolerable," but earlier the draft justified and not merely tolerated some (presumably usable) counter-force nuclear weapons.

I myself maintain that nuclear weapons should never be used. It seems that the present draft would be better and more consistent if it maintained the same position.

Toleration of deterrence. One of the distinctive theological and ethical contributions made by the American bishops is the concept of the toleration of deterrence, including counter-city deterrence. The conciliar or papal teaching never uses the concept or word toleration. The present draft is very careful to spell out the meaning of toleration: The present deterrence relationship between the United States and Russia is a sinful situation and an objectively evil situation.

Toleration involves tolerating the lesser of two evils. Toleration in this case is based on the judgment that to deny nuclear deterrence any moral legitimacy may bring about worse consequences than we presently live with under conditions of deterrence. The paradox is that the sinful situation of deterrence does bring about "peace of a sort."

As noted in the draft, toleration is an accepted concept in

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Catholic moral theology. Perhaps the most famous examples are the toleration of prostitution and the pre-Vatican II toleration of religious liberty or separation of church and state.

What explains the use of toleration here? The concept appeared on the American scene in the testimony to a congressional committee by Cardinal Krol on the SALT II treaty on September 6, 1979. In the 1976 pastoral letter *To Live in Christ Jesus* as I mentioned earlier, the bishops made the statement that, in addition to the wrong in using nuclear weapons against civilian populations, it is also wrong to threaten to attack them as part of a strategy of deterrence. Did this mean that there was a moral obligation to get rid of such deterrence? Krol obviously did not want to call for the removal of all counter-population deterrence so he used the category of toleration. The possession of such nuclear weapons for deterrence can be tolerated as the lesser of two evils provided there is hope of meaningful nuclear arms reduction.

The problem arises only if one maintains that it is wrong to threaten to attack population centers. Some theorists might not want to admit that you cannot threaten what you cannot do; then it would not be necessary to invoke the concept of toleration. But in the light of the 1976 statement the only way for the American bishops to avoid a call for unilateral counter-city nuclear disarmament is to invoke the concept of toleration.

There is a further question that ethicists should rightly ask in searching out the meaning of toleration: what is the evil that is tolerated? The draft and the Krol statement are not entirely clear. In my judgment the evil which is tolerated in both cases is precisely the evil intention to threaten population centers.

If this is the case, then here is an application of toleration different from that of the past. One is hereby tolerating one's *own* intention to do evil (threaten a population center). In tolerating prostitution or the separation of church and state, one did not tolerate one's own intention to do evil. Tolerating one's own evil intention appears to be a new proposal in Catholic ethical thought.

There might be another possible explanation of the toleration involved here. Krol interprets the 1976 statement that it is "wrong to threaten to attack population centers" as referring to "the *declared intent* to use them involved in our deterrence policy is wrong." Perhaps deterrence need not depend on declared intent. Deterrence might come from the very existence and possession of the weapons in the context of the mistrust which characterizes international relationship at present. The threat in this case is taken by the other party but is not given by our expressed or declared intention. In this case the evil tolerated is simply the existence and possession of these weapons, not the declared intention to use them. Such an approach obviates the problem involved in tolerating one's own intention to do or threaten that which is evil. However, even if this were the correct interpretation, and it does not seem to be so, there would still be some problems. Could such possession, plus the threat, undeclared but implicit in the existing situation, really deter? For deterrence to work, would not at least some people in the chain of command still need to have the intention to threaten? The questions raised by the discussion of toleration thus illustrate the complexity of the conceptual problem in dealing with this agonizing existential question of nuclear deterrence.

Limits of deterrence. The draft does warn that gradual disarmament has become a meaningless term and that the status quo cannot be maintained. The document urges the immediate end, by all states, of the further development, production, and deployment of new weapons and delivery systems. Also unilateral initiatives by the United States are called for, with the only example being to forego deployment of weapons used mainly in a first strike.

Earlier official statements from some Catholic bishops in the United States proposed even more specific criteria and judgments. Krol testified: "too long have we been guided by the false criterion of equivalence or superiority of armaments. . . ." This questioning and repudiation of the criterion of "superiority" or "equivalence" in favor of "sufficiency" should be incorporated into the bishops' statement.

Spokespersons for the Catholic bishops have also come out against the development of the neutron bomb. Similar judgments should be incorporated here as illustrations and applications of the general principles expressed earlier and of the criterion of sufficiency of deterrence. Such suggestions are obviously prudential and would not pretend to have achieved moral certitude, but they would raise some questions for the consciences of all of us especially those in the military, in defense planning, and in nuclear arms production.

Ecclesiological aspects. A bishops' pastoral on peace, war, and disarmament not only involves complex ethical questions but also raises many ecclesiological problems. This document reasserts, as would be expected, that the whole church can never become a sect or an opposition movement. The church has a role of involvement in the world and in trying to better the world. Such an involvement means that at times the church must tolerate the existence of evil while striving to change it.

Within the church the draft rightly recognizes the pluralism of possible approaches including pacifism and just war theories. The document is also very conscious of the difficulty of arriving at certitude because of the great complexity involved in prudential judgments. As a result of this complexity the bishops' conclusions are offered as an "invitation to moral direction, dialogue, and growth." The draft makes a neat distinction between principles and conclusions. The document recognizes that it cannot be content with merely restating general moral principles nor with making obvious specific requirements such as the humane treatment of prisoners, but that it must look at the nature of existing and planned weapons systems, and the use and consequences of their use. I believe this is the proper way for a church document to proceed. It is necessary at times even in the midst of complexity to come to some specific judgments; but the more specific one becomes, the lesser is the degree of certitude and the greater the possibility of disagreement within the one body of the church. In short, this document recognizes a "big church" with the possibility of pluralism on specific complex issues.

Such an understanding of ecclesiology affects the way in

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which the teaching function of the hierarchical magisterium is understood and exercised. The church is a community of moral discourse. A pastoral letter alone will never suffice for the true teaching and learning function of the whole church. All are called to examine their consciences, pray, study, dialogue, decide, and then take actions aimed at making true peace and justice more present in our world.

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Screen

A DEFINITE SMILE

THE AGE OF HAPPY ENDINGS

NO SELF-RESPECTING TEENAGER can hang out at a McDonald's or an Arby's. To hang out you need an eatery that's unique to your turf, a hamburger joint that's capable of being an institution as well. Since the fast-food chains have driven these places out of business in the last two decades, they now exist for most of us only in memory—as part of our memory of the fifties. Perhaps that's why *The Atomic Café* and *Diner*, both of which express a kind of nostalgia for the fifties, are named after such greasy spoons. In my previous column, I was discussing *Atomic Café*. It's a film that's scary because it shows us what a cavalier attitude we were taking toward nuclear holocaust twenty-five years ago. But at the same time, it makes us rather sentimental about those days because it shows how naive we were. We must have led charmed lives to have been so simple-minded and prospered anyway. We must have been awfully lucky just to have survived.

Since Americans don't believe they have good luck on their side any more, a movie that reminds us of a time when we did believe it, and have it, is bound to be appealing. *Atomic Café* has this appeal in spite of itself. *Diner* has it by intention, and writer-director Barry Levinson gets all the mileage out of it he can.

Like *Atomic Café*, *Diner* absolutely wallows in fifties' trivia. Rare is the scene that doesn't contain reference to a song, movie, or other artifact of the times. While Boogie (Michael Rourke) is trying to get his date at the movies to jump into his jeans, Troy Donahue is on the screen providing appropriate dialogue. Dialogue from *The Sweet Smell of Success* is provided elsewhere courtesy of some flippo who's memorized the entire script and goes around reciting it. And lines from a third fifties' melodrama, this one seen on a TV monitor in a studio, get all mixed up with what Billy (Timothy Daly) has to say to his pregnant girlfriend. Eddie (Steve Guttenberg) makes his girl take a football quiz before marrying him, and Shrevie (Daniel Sterne) knows the label on which "Donna" and every hit in the top 100 was recorded. Since the time is Christmas week, 1959, "Merry Xmas, Baby" is inevitably one of the biggies played on the car radios.

> Merry Xmas, baby,
> You really did treat me nice.
> Gave me a hi-fi for X-mas,
> Now I'm livin' in paradise.

The kids who hang out at this diner live in a fool's paradise themselves. Their life together is, as Fenwick (Kevin Bacon) is so fond of saying, "a definite smile." This does not mean that they don't have their problems. Boogie has the worst one. He drops a $2,000 bet to the local bookie, whose muscle comes to the beauty parlor where Boogie works to rough him up so he'll pay. He only works there to pick up girls. He's got exactly fifty-six dollars to his name. Eddie's troubles are that his girl flunks the football quiz, and then he doesn't want to marry her. Shrevie and his wife Beth (Ellen Barkin) aren't getting along, either, which leads Boogie to try to seduce her. Fenwick hates his family, is half way to being an alcoholic, and on the edge of a breakdown. One night he takes off his clothes and curls up in the manger of a nativity scene on a church lawn.

Yet somehow these young men, like the people in *Atomic Café*, don't have to suffer the consequences of their own stupidity. Again it is as if their ignorance and their misplaced self-confidence protect them from harm. At the last minute Boogie decides not to go through with his assignation with Beth, which is a good thing since, unbeknownst to him, Shrevie would have been watching them. Then an old friend of Boogie's father pays Boogie's gambling debt; and to top it off, Boogie gets away with punching out the bookie's hood. Most other people's problems sort themselves out similarly. Like the people who escape nuclear attack unscathed in *Atomic Café*, the characters in *Diner* live in a world where no real harm can befall you—the world that Americans actually thought existed for them in the fifties. At one point Boogie and Fenwick go for a drive in the country, where they watch a beautiful girl galloping across her family's estate. "Do you ever get the feeling there's something going on we don't know about?" Fenwick asks. Maybe so. But we're also sure that what these kids don't know won't hurt them.

Diner begins with an act of vandalism. During a high school dance, Fenwick goes down in the basement and punches out some windows for a "smile." Thus do we get the impression that he and his friends are what used to be called, in the fifties themselves, juvenile delinquents. This isn't quite so, but *Diner* has a lot of the ethos of the fifties movie about delinquency. From the minute we lay eyes on John Cassavetes in *Crime in the Streets* (1956), we know that deep down inside he's not bad. There's more to this punk than meets the eye, we tell ourselves; and we're right. The same with Fenwick. At one

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point his brother yells at him in exasperation, "Did you ever read a book, huh?" Fenwick scowls defiantly. "Nah, nah, I never did," he replies. But we know better, for we saw him watching "College Bowl" on television and answering all the questions before the contestants could. He called them all "bozos" when they missed one. He must have snuck a look at a book somewhere along the line.

A couple of books I happened to read around the time I saw *Diner* struck me in connection with the film. John Gregory Dunne and Saul Bellow are about as different as it's possible for novelists to be; yet *Dutch Shea, Jr.* and *The Dean's December* are in part preoccupied with the same social pathology. Both novels contain a crucial sub-plot in which their heroes attempt to cope with the black "underclass," urban crime, random violence, etc. The characters introduced in these sections lurk in the background at the end of each novel, when Bellow's Corde resigns his deanship and Dutch Shea, Jr., kills himself. In both novels I get the feeling that it is not only the hero, but the novelist himself who feels helpless in the face of these black muggers, junkies, and sex offenders. Neither the hero nor the novelist can cope with certain scenes their stories contain.

Language is a novelist's ultimate weapon, his last line of defense against the world he creates, and neither Bellow nor Dunne can find the language they need to cope with such characters. (Bellow's novel, especially, is a programmatic, almost philosophical, search through different varieties of language that might be applied.) In the end neither Bellow nor Dunne can overcome the hopelessness one feels living in a society that has these killers and rapists in it. The hopelessness seems to be endemic to the society itself. The black criminals in the novels do not finally have more to them than meets the eye, as Fenwick does, and in consequence Bellow and Dunne are defeated as writers.

In *Dutch Shea, Jr.* and *The Dean's December*, we confront characters so remorseless about acts so horrible that we despair of both them and ourselves In *Diner* we meet characters so "squirrelly," as we used to say, that we do not need to worry about them. This is why they are such a definite smile. When everyone leaves that dance at the beginning, Fenwick's car is in the lead. He's drunk and speeds away from the others, with the result that Boogie and Shrevie round a bend to find his car tipped on its side with him lying beside it covered with blood. But as they approach in shock, Fenwick jumps up laughing and produces from his pocket a ketchup bottle which, he announces, he's been carrying around for a week. This little scene, ending as it does in a sigh of relief, sets the mood for the whole movie. It recalls perfectly what all the crises of the fifties were like.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

Extra copies of this August 13 issue on bishops and the bomb are available (10-25 copies, 75¢ each; over 25 copies, 50¢ each).

Dance

DOLLARS & DANCE

FELD BALLET'S JOYCE THEATER

THE BALEFUL GLARE of Reganomics softened for a moment a year ago just long enough to thaw frozen federal funds allocated for an urban development grant. The result was that this summer the new Joyce Theater opened its doors for the first New York season the Feld Ballet has had in four years. The Joyce and the Feld Ballet are inextricably bound together; the company desperately needed the new theater, and the theater exists because of the ballet company's need. Both reflect the economic pressures in today's theatrical world.

Eliot Feld, the company's artistic director and chief choreographer, created his first ballet, "Harbinger," a decade and a half ago for American Ballet Theater, with whom he was associated as a dancer. He quickly followed with "At Midnight," a work that was as warmly received as had been "Harbinger." Disagreement over the artistic direction of the company caused Feld to leave, and in two years he had formed his own company, known as the American Ballet Company, performing at the Brooklyn Academy of Music and touring nationally as well as internationally.

As artistic director, Feld insisted upon having a live orchestra. Artistically this makes sense—a live orchestra enhances performance quality tremendously. But it also is a financial millstone for all but the most established companies. It was fatal to the American Ballet Company, which was forced to disband after three years during which Feld had created a dozen ballets.

With the assistance of Joseph Papp, a reconstituted Eliot Feld Ballet, without live music, became resident dance company in the intimate Newman Theater. The three-hundred-seat Newman was a considerable distance from the over two-thousand seat Brooklyn Academy opera house; but then Feld had begun to restructure his creative thinking. Intimacy of detail rather than amplitude of choreographic pattern became his chief concern. In the middle 1970s, touring was still possible despite the enhanced costs of travel and accommodations triggered by the oil embargo. As these costs grew, touring became less and less a profitable way for a company to derive revenue, and companies gave more and more thought to playing extended seasons in their home cities.

For this reason, the problem shifted to selecting a suitable facility; one that was large enough to have a healthy weekly gross and yet not too expensive to run. The combination proved to be elusive. After bringing his company to the verge of bankruptcy trying to find the right theater, Feld decided that there had to be another solution for the middle-sized company

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such as his. An opera house was too large and a three-hundred-seat theater was too small. He hit upon the solution of building his own theater. In this century only three dancer-choreographers had managed to do so—Ted Shawn, Lester Horton, and George Balanchine. Feld became the fourth.

In the thirties, Ted Shawn acquired a farm and out-buildings in Becket, Massachusetts, and he and his company members did the actual renovations themselves to create Jacob's Pillow. Lester Horton converted a small downtown theater in Los Angeles in 1948 with much donated help. Nelson Rockefeller, then governor of New York, commissioned Phillip Johnson, a friend and admirer of Balanchine's, to design New York State Theater as part of the developing Lincoln Center complex. Now Feld and his administrative right hand Cora Cahan, solicited public and private funds and, most imaginatively, an urban development grant. The latter was the final piece of the financial package which a momentarily benign administration allowed to pass after all such grants had been otherwise halted.

What is it, exactly, that Feld has wrought in converting the old 1941 Elgin movie house into the "high tech" Joyce Theater with its art-deco trim? He has a house with 475 seats raked so that all offer an unrestricted view of the stage. A stage the size of a good large house has been fashioned, rehearsal and dressing room facilities are located beneath the auditorium, and a sound system that still needs some adjusting is in place. The lack of an orchestra pit precludes live music except for that provided by a small ensemble like a string quartet or solo instrumentalists. The intimacy of the house provides the correct viewing distance for Feld's own ballets and they look marvelous in the setting. The lack of contracted musicians helps keep the week-by-week cost down; and with first call on the performing times, Feld is in a position to present his ballets exactly as he wishes them to be seen, at a reasonable cost, and whenever it suits him. In short, the Joyce Theater—like previously constructed dance theaters—has been shaped by a personal vision.

While worrying through the development of the theater, Feld has also continued making new ballets for his company's repertory. Technically, the company has moved from the ballet orientation that governed its early years to a ballet company at ease with pieces styled in the flexed-foot, live-torso manner of modern dance. Among the most successful of the new works was "Play Bach," which poses athletically ingenious partnering problems for ten women and five men. It is a visual feast of the extremities as legs and arms cross, pump, thrust, and entwine. The spirit is that of genuine play.

Far from playful was "Over The Pavement," a dance for seven men set to selections of astringent Charles Ives music, including the selection which gives the dance its title. The men are down-and-outers although they aren't old enough to know it yet. They "hang out" aggressively and are obviously destined for a short, brutal existence devoid of tenderness.

"Scenes" partakes of some of the same atmosphere as it depicts a thirties' parade of incidents which transpire beneath elevated train tracks. Scruffy kids play, a dog cavorts, a man out of work scans the help wanted columns, and a rich couple wheel a perambulator. A policeman keeps order, and there are hints of romance and even burlesque comedy as the scenes succeed one another like a flickering silent film. Dramatically, it has moments; overall, it never quite unites forcefully.

"Anatomic Balm" is another play on words as the soothing anatomical display of eleven slinky women acquires an explosive impact. The accompaniment was a selection of ragtime music played at excruciatingly slow tempos and poured like aural treacle over the women who were being blatantly or coyly alluring. It brought to mind the Storeyville district portrayed so vividly in Louis Malle's *Pretty Baby*.

It was good to see a revival of "Theater" though one missed Jennifer Tipton's superb lighting design which first enhanced it in 1971. The stock commedia del'arte figures are a difficult challenge, but Feld puts them through their paces with masterly efficiency. Gianfranco Paoluzi was the betrayed Pierrot and Traci Owens a vixenish Columbina. The earliest pieces included were "Harbinger" and "At Midnight." In the latter the principal roles were expressively danced by Megan Murphy, Gloria Brisbin, Richard Fein, and Timothy Cronin. During the season Edmond LaFosse was very effective in "Danzon Cubano" as was Cheryl Jones in "Half Time."

The company is a strong one and dances with a real ensemble feeling. The repertory looks good in its new setting, which, one hopes, other companies will find as congenial a facility as does the Feld Ballet. It is a small miracle of persistence and luck that it exists at all. With a swipe of the wrecker's ball this spring, three theaters on Broadway vanished, the Bijou, the Helen Hayes, and the Morosco. The Joyce cuts the net loss to two.

DON McDONAGH

STEVEN SPIELBERG'S SUBURBAN ANIMISM

Very high sci-fi

TOM O'BRIEN

THE SUMMER'S CROP of science fiction movies proves two things. First, the price of special effects may have risen from a dime a dozen but a good story is still hard to find. Second, despite all the novel gizmos, something old remains at the center of the best films, a strong if heterodox religious sensibility which uses special effects to evoke the marvelous and uncanny. In a famous essay, "The UFO as a Religious Symbol," C. G. Jung suggested that modern man appropriates machine images to his own magical purposes, and turns the stuff of science to myth and religion. No filmmaker does this better than Steven

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Spielberg, a suburban animist with a tinge of Manicheanism.

Watch Spielberg's pizzas, watch his toys, dolls, and train sets. In *E.T.*, watch his use of Coors beer and Pez candies. On one level, this mass of details explains part of the appeal of his films—the lovingly nostalgic recreation of American life, particularly suburban life, that engages viewer sympathy, tickles humor, and establishes credibility for the weird events about to happen. On another level, however, these physical, almost palpable recreations of the material world are not the antithesis of Spielberg's interest in the uncanny; rather, their intensity explains it.

Consider only the opening scenes of *E.T.*: we are saturated in an atmosphere of Fresca and Coke, game boards and softball mitts, video games and ringing telephones, pets and unwashed dishes. Spielberg's televisions are always on and always full of—what else?—commercials; the stage business of his films reads like a combined Sears catalogue and grocery list. But only someone so overwhelmed by this proliferation of things could so need religion that he has to invent one—or at least something supernatural—to believe in. Spielberg's roving camera shots of sunlit but emotionally vacuous California settings underline in panoramic terms what his details imply: amid all these things, something is missing, something (as in *Poltergeist*), is unaccounted for.

Science fiction as a genre developed historically in concurrence with science, the industrial revolution, and modern material civilization; America in the 1960s, when Spielberg grew up, was simply the apex of these developments. His "materialism" is thus an inversion of the so-called "post-materialism" of those in his generation who dropped out or pursued unlucrative careers. Instead of revolting against things, however, Spielberg presents a private vision: he sees *through* them. In his films, kitchen chairs suddenly become possessed (*Poltergeist*), a woodshed becomes alive (*E.T.*). or mashed potatoes—in a classic scene from *Close Encounters*—become a key to finding extraterrestrial life. To the spiritually enlightened—the kids in the recent films, or Richard Dreyfuss in the older one—ordinary things open up to reveal unearthly wonders. E.T.'s plaintive cry, "Home!" is thus not just the center of his story, but an expression of Spielberg's own religious longing for a transfiguration of earth.

Spielberg's animism is complicated by the religious extremism which he shares, to some degree, with other directors of science fiction. According to their plots, whatever comes out of a spaceship must either save us or destroy us; no E.T. can be the kind of *l'homme moyen sensuel* who lives in one of Spielberg's Villes Nouvelles Condeaux. His own E.T. despite all the fuss over his creation and engineering, belongs to hallowed moral tradition—from films like *2001*, *Superman*, or the earlier *Red Planet Mars* and *The Day the Earth Stood Still*—where something or someone Godlike or Christlike saves, or at least renews, humanity—or reaffirms its best impulses. If in doubt, check out the print ad for *E.T.*, borrowed from the Sistine Chapel.

Curiously, Spielberg almost made a science-fiction film in the other tradition—alive in films like *Blade Runner* or *The Thing* (an awful remake of a 1951 classic)—where humanity must confront demonic and sadistic threats and where Apocalypse hovers in every special effect. According to Kathleen Kennedy, who co-produced *E.T.*, its original plot was "about an extraterrestrial siege, an attack," in which we would see "ten or twelve creatures in a rather unsympathetic light—scared, frightened, and, at the same time, very aggressive." According to Kennedy, however, "Steven became so uncomfortable with the idea of horrific aliens descending to earth and hurting people, which was completely an opposite point of view from what he had done with *Close Encounters*, that the story had to change." As much as Spielberg's change of heart, "completely the opposite" is the key here; in sci-fi, there are only two options, angels or devils.

In effect, Spielberg gives us something like the rejected *E.T.* in *Poltergeist*, although that film is not exactly sci-fi but the closely related ghost genre. Produced, co-written, but not directed by Spielberg, the film suffers from several divisions of responsibility, and the plot involving the demonic is weak. One notes, moreover, that the operative demon gains leverage because of human evil—developers careless about some old cemeteries when bestowing progress on one of Spielberg's archetypal condo wastelands. The poltergeists belonging to the corpses aroused by this mistreatment are enlisted by a satanic force, terrorize a family, and are finally, if fitfully, exorcised. Despite this hocus-pocus, however, the haunting is chilling and

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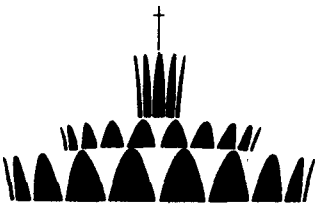

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well prepared: beware the dead pet bird at the film's opening and the initial excavation for the swimming pool. Beneath affluence and rational exteriors, the film implies, lie unrepented sins ready to explode and destroy the (slightly funky) sanctity of a Spielberg home.

In *E.T.*, the sanctity of home is threatened too, but not by the alien, who is cloaked in extensive religious symbolism. A child befriends him with offerings of M & M's, Coke, and Pez (an evocative anachronism from Spielberg's childhood); the whole scene looks curiously like a sacramental ritual. With the child at school, E.T. has a "field day" at home, learning the letter "B" from TV's Sesame Street, mastering computers, raiding the refrigerator, and finally guzzling Coors, another communion symbol—by telepathy, when E.T. drinks, his friend at school belches and grows woozy. In addition, the crucial events of the plot occur on Halloween, All Saints Day, and All Souls; when E.T. dies, he has the power to rise again. He can make bikes leap into the sky at a single bound. His UFO has a spire. When he leaves, his message to the child parallels some words of Christ at the Ascension.

The real aliens in *E.T.* (like the developers in *Poltergeist*) are the "establishment": scientists, police, teachers. They first patrol the house after their suspicions are aroused by geiger counter readings; they hover around like a stalking pervert from "Quincy" or, with a radio car to listen in, like the Gestapo in resistance films. We never see their whole bodies; the camera views them at waist level, like the biology teacher whose frog dissection class the child disrupts when inspired by a new respect for life. In effect, the camera thus mimics a child's physical point of view; it also turns the adults into disembodied, dissected, humanoid forms of power without heart or head. When they finally invade the house, the child's mother protests, "This is my home," echoing some of E.T.'s homesickness. But even she can't see him; when her little girl tries to introduce them, she knocks him down with a refrigerator door, missing him amid all the things in her kitchen. In the film's best scene, she misses him in a closet because he looks exactly like the dolls stored there. In Spielberg's universe, only as a child can you enter the kingdom.

Spielberg's defects are glaring: escapism, romanticism about children, a counter-cultural depiction of alienation, both literal and figurative. Nevertheless, he has great power to lift the soul and move the heart by combining great effects with small, and in the past such gifts have usually been called art. As a mythmaker, however, he shares the defect of other creators of science fiction, not excess but defect of imagination. Their substitute religion is based on an unspiritual premise: something physical is going to save or destroy us, depending on whether the E.T.'s involved are angelic or satanic. If extra-terrestrial intelligence exists, however, it might just

TOM O'BRIEN *teaches literature at Manhattan School of Music. His article on "Chariots of Fire" appeared in the April 23, 1982 of* Commonweal.

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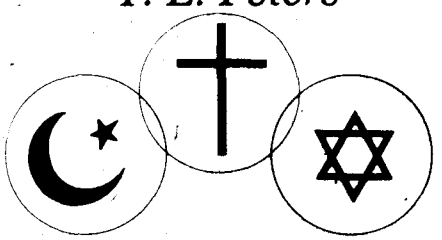
Judaism, Christianity, Islam

F. E. Peters



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be morally mediocre, however bright at engineering (like the Swiss, for example). It never occurs to any sci-fi director or writer, except Swift—who was, naturally, thought mad—that alternate physical worlds, whatever the differences of their creatures in size and shape, must in the nature of *things* be as gray as ours, as haunted by defect and excellence. Such imaginings would demythologize the skies, and bring us back to square one, where real belief in the spiritual was required. Spielberg's limit is that things inhabit the other side of his things. But other worlds aren't *other*, and salvation is more uncanny than special effects.

Church/world watch

(Continued from page 423)

up to Beirut. As several commentators have noted, Israel did not face in 1982 the threat to its vital security posed by the wars of 1967 and 1973; hence the requirement of proportionality should be stringently applied to the invasion. There is much talk today that the invasion has created a new situation with new potential for Lebanon and the Middle East. Undoubtedly, a new situation exists and should be used creatively. But the historical record is distorted, and, more importantly, dangerous precedents for the future could be set if it is not said clearly in several quarters that the Israeli invasion violated reasonable standards of proportionality.

In light of both proportionality and the protection of civilian lives, a further conclusion should be drawn. The PLO should be forced to leave; they are a major part of the problem in Lebanon. But no moral calculus will justify an assault on West Beirut with its heavily populated civilian sector. The loss of Israeli, Lebanese, and Palestinian lives will only compound the devastation which already exceeds both political and moral limits.

Third, lost in the fury of the attack was the fact that crossing the boundary of a state, even an enfeebled one like Lebanon, requires more justification than has been offered thus far. The Israeli attack on the Iraqui nuclear reactor in 1981 along with the most recent invasion of Lebanon highlight a deeper issue. Israel does indeed have a narrow margin of physical security in the Middle East; but this fact cannot be used as automatic justification for any action Israel believes necessary for its security. As one of Israel's strongest supporters, Dr. Kissinger, once observed, a state's quest for absolute security means every other state's insecurity. Respect for international borders, Israel's, Lebanon's and other Arab states', is a requirement for long-term stability in the Middle East.

There is a new situation in the Middle East and shaping it in the direction of stable relations based on the just claims of each of the parties is the primary need of the moment. But the past hangs as a memory for peoples and states, and judgments on past events serve to set precedents for the future. To build the future with stability means recognizing which actions of the past should not be allowed to be repeated.

The new situation must be used first and foremost to create a new future for Lebanon. Lebanon needs (1) freedom from foreign occupation; (2) a central government with effective authority, and (3) assistance from the international community. The U.S. role in all three is crucial. The Lebanese expect both diplomatic and economic assistance from Washington; they should be guaranteed both; this is the immediate task facing U.S. policy.

The long-term problem is the more challenging one for the U.S. role, for it concerns the relationship of the Lebanese question to the larger problem of the Middle East. The new situation in the Middle East is not limited to the changes wrought in Lebanon. The Camp David process has been stymied for two years; Saudi Arabia has a new king; the Gulf States face complex policy choices, the war between Iran and Iraq has entered a new phase; and all the states in the region need to review their political positions in light of events in Lebanon. All of this constitutes a major transformation of relationships in the region. A systematic U.S. address to the region by the Reagan administration is much needed. When a vacuum exists in U.S. policy, unilateral actions taken by U.S. allies or adversaries in the region then force the United States to react in an ad-hoc fashion. Few believe that we did not know of Israeli intentions to invade; but a presumption of ignorance on the part of the United States proves the point. We were implicated in the invasion by our *de facto* alliance with Israel and the use of U.S. arms. For us to be forced to react *post-factum* to the event illustrates the danger of a passive U.S. approach to the Middle East.

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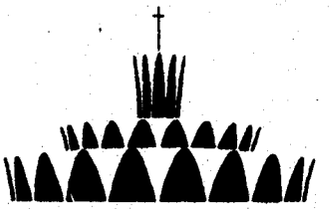

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The Camp David framework provides a basis for a systematic approach to the region, but now more than ever it is imperative to go beyond Camp David. In the Mass for Lebanon on June 29, the pope said of the Palestinian people: "Let us pray that they may be able to see recognized their legitimate aspirations—the first of which is to be able to have a homeland—and that they may be able to live in tranquillity with all the peoples of the region." In 1976 Archbishop Bernardin, speaking for the U.S. Catholic Conference, said: "I . . . urge our government . . . to take explicitly the position that the Palestinians be included as partners in future negotiations about the Middle East."

The opportunity for the United States to move these two issues is today greater than it was in 1976. If anything is clear about the new situation in the Middle East, it is that there has been enough recourse to violence on all sides and too little aggressive diplomacy since Camp David was signed. The need to reconcile Israel's need for security with a Palestinian homeland remains at the heart of the Middle East problem. The United States should be committed to both objectives. The elements of Israeli security, Palestinian homeland, Arab stability, and the security of the Gulf States require a comprehensive vision of the Middle East problem. U.S. policy has not risen to that level of analysis recently. The time for us to do so is running out.

J. BRYAN HEHIR

Correspondence

(Continued from page 418)

The editorial also objects to our use of "moral majoritarians" to describe, among others, Jerry Falwell and Moral Majority, James Robison and the Religious Roundtable, Phyllis Schlafly and the Eagle Forum. Others may refer to them as the New Christian Right, the New Right, the Radical Religious Right, or ultrafundamentalists. Whatever they are called, the question is whether the groups and their leaders, who claim they work closely together and head a movement, should be held accountable for their own words and their own actions. We believe they should.

Some examples of their words and actions:

1. *Censorship*. Jerry Falwell, in a national mailing dated January 1, 1981, exhorted readers to "examine your public schools' libraries and textbooks for immoral, anti-family and anti-American content. . . .][t is so important that we remove offensive materials from our classrooms and libraries immediately. . . .

The Moral Majority is already working with several organizations to remove these harmful sex education materials from classrooms."

2. *Weakening child abuse laws*. Last year, Greg Dixon, the National Secretary of the Moral Majority, successfully lobbied to roll back Indiana's child abuse protections. The new law guarantees a parent's right to strike a child. Dixon explains "the parents own the children" and "if you haven't left any marks, you probably haven't whipped your children."

3. *Eliminating Social Security*. The Religious Roundtable, on whose board sit Jerry Falwell, James Robison and Charles Stanley (all featured in our ad), called Social Security "probably the most tragic and criminal plunder ever perpetrated against the American people by liberal government," and opposes Social Security since to do otherwise is not "biblically-consistent."

4. *Denying homosexuals the right to vote*. Jerry Falwell in Houston, Texas, on February 27, 1982, stated: "I am against giving homosexuals bona fide minority status or even recognizing their right to decide who is going to rule in the political processes."

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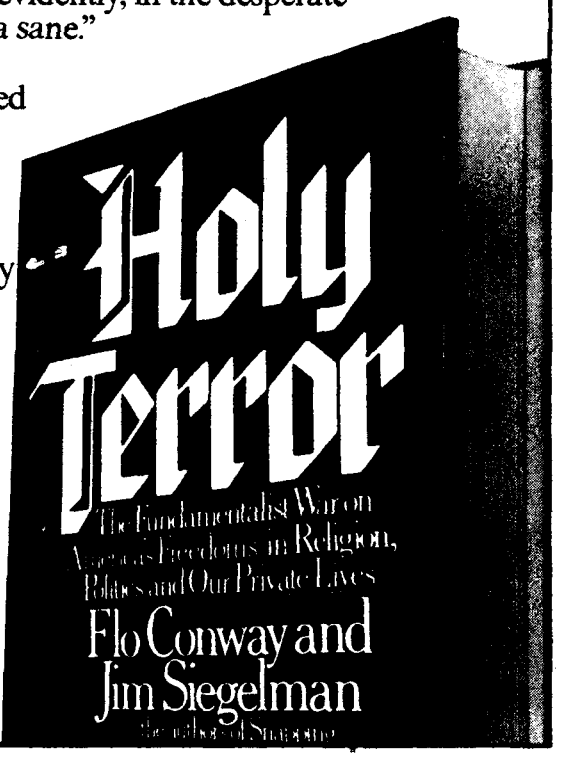

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ANTHONY T. PODESTA
Executive Director
People for the American Way

For more on this, see editorial, page 420.

THE EDITORS

Bellow & Maloff

Walla Walla, Wash.

To the Editors: Whatever the merits of Saul Bellow's new novel, *The Dean's December*, they were not particularly well served by Saul Maloff's review in the May 21 issue. While Maloff skillfully recreates the flavor of Bellow's book, some of his assertions strain credulity, to put it mildly.

Does Maloff really believe that Bellow is "our *only* serious novelist of general ideas" (my italics)? Has he read Walker Percy or Styron? or Robert Penn Warren? or Mary Gordon? or Eudora Welty? or Elie Wiesel? (maybe immigrants don't count??)

And as for this Maloffism: "No novelist is more worldly than Bellow, and none more otherworldly"—please translate. The essay abounds with such baffling critical pieties, leading one to observe: Maloff, your thirties are showing. Bellow deserves better.

JOHN DESMOND

The author replies:

The man who conjured up that motley, ill-assorted collection of names ranging indiscriminately from distinguished or wonderfully promising to indifferent or worse doesn't know what a truly *serious* novelist is and wouldn't know a "general idea" if it appeared before him in a shower of gold. And surely that trifling taunt about "immigrants" doesn't warrant reply—a loutish insult, witless malice.

As for my "worldly-otherworldly" remark, why, the entire essay can be read as a gloss upon it. And need I point out that though a critical or any other remark may be "baffling" and may be a "piety," it can't very well be both. A footling crack, that snickering one about my "thirties," mere pettifoggery.

But hark—why this disquieting feeling that even though Desmond grants I "skillfully recreated" a sense of the novel, he himself hasn't read it?

SAUL MALOFF

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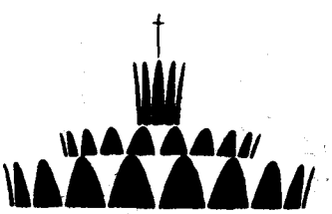

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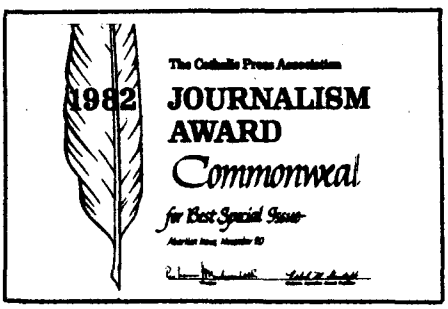

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